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New	Autosleeper Kingham	was £53,995	now £50,995
New	Pilote G600L	was £58,275	now £52,995
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2013 62	PILOTE (LHD) G742 LCE EXPLORATEUR DIAMOND 3k Miles, island bed, F/lounge.....		£69,995
2007	Phoenix Liner i8000L 56,500 Miles.....		£64,995
2008	LE VOYAGER 675 LVX MERCEDES 30k Miles, Large Front Lounge, End Bathroom		£59,995
2009	BURSTNER i821G ELEGANCE 29k miles.....		£57,995
2014	PILOTE G600L 2k miles		£56,995
2010	FRANKIA i680 ED 38k miles		£49,995
2010	FRANKIA i680 ED 27k miles		£49,995
2014	GLOBECAR FAMILYSCOUT L (ELEVATING ROOF) 10k miles		£46,995
2009	PILOTE EXPLORATEUR 730FG 39k miles, Rear Bed Over Garage, Front Lounge.....		£46,995
2009	RAPIDO 9096 Front Lounge, Transverse R/Bed		£45,995
2012	BURSTNER NEXXO T728 8k miles		£44,995
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**PILOTE EXPLORATEUR
DIAMOND G742C**

• Front Lounge • Rear Central Bed

MILES: 2,000 BERTHS: 4 YEAR: 2014



RAPIDO 9097F

• Rear bed
• Garage

MILES: 39,000 YEAR: 2007



AUTOTRAIL TRACKER RB

• Transverse Island Bed
• Front lounge

MILES: 7K YEAR: 2014



AUTO TRAIL NAVAJO FRONTIER

• Front Lounge • Rear Kitchen
• Over Cab Bed

MILES: 9,000 BERTHS: 4 YEAR: 2012



KNAUS SUN TI

• Front Lounge
• Rear Kitchen

MILES: 10,000 YEAR: 2014



AUTOTRAIL CHEYENNE 840 S

• Twin Single Beds
• Rear Washroom

MILES: 40K BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2009



AUTO SLEEPER NEUVO EK

• Front Lounge
• Rev Camera • Bike Rack

MILES: 16K BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2010



AUTOCRUISE SPORTSTAR

• Rear Bed Over Garage • ½ Dinette
• Rear S/Belts

MILES: 14,000 BERTHS: 3 YEAR: 2009



SWIFT VOYAGER 685 FB

MILES: 8,000 BERTHS: 6 YEAR: 2009



SWIFT KON-TIKI 645

• Rear lounge
• Double dinette

MILES: 8,700 YEAR: 2010



AUTOSLEEPER WINDRUSH

• Rear bunk beds

MILES: 16,000 YEAR: 2012



AUTOSLEEPER KEMERTON

• Rear Washroom
• Front Lounge • 3 Seat Belts

MILES: 21K BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2012



AUTOCRUISE TEMPO

• Front Lounge
• 3 Seat Belts • Rear Washroom

MILES: 25K BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2011



GLOBECAR TRENDSCOUT

• Rear Lounge

MILES: 39K YEAR: 2010



PILOTE P600

• French Bed
• Front Lounge

MILES: 18,000 BERTHS: 3 YEAR: 2011



TIMBERLAND ENDEAVOUR

• Rear Washroom
• Front Lounge • 3 Seat Belts

MILES: 25,000 BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2007



SWIFT BOLERO 600 EK

• Rear Washroom
• Front Lounge

MILES: 15,000 BERTHS: 4 YEAR: 2010



WHEELHOME PANACHE

• Elevating Roof
• Rock n Roll Bed

MILES: 32,000 BERTHS: 2 YEAR: 2008

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Grenzenlos wohlfühlen

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* Patent Pending: GB1317769.6



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In this issue of **Which motorhome**



This month it's our annual campervan special, with our biggest ever group test of VWs. We've focused on the affordable end of the T5 market, but if you can stretch to a new T6, I've just been absolutely blown away by the Pearlescent Onyx White example above. With the top-spec 204PS engine and DSG gearbox, it's a real flyer – and the latest Euro VI engines are not affected by the VW emissions debacle. Ok, this one was a Caravelle people-carrier, but it shares its new dashboard (and limo-like refinement, thanks to extra soundproofing) with the new California Ocean camper (but not T6 vans). With soft-touch plastics and Audi-esque quality, this new cab takes the campervan driving environment into a whole new league. I can't wait to try the new Cali!



PETER VAUGHAN EDITOR



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THE
**CARAVAN
CLUB**

This month

Danbury ready to Go with Ford-based campervans

Keenly priced new models offer car-like driving with three levels of camping kit

Now, Fun and Go are the three new campervan conversions launched by Danbury on Ford base vehicles. The entry-level Now – based on the Ford Tourneo Connect – can be used as a compact camper or a five-seat car for daily use. The key feature is that the camping kit is removable, with the fridge, toilet, cooker and storage all in one unit at the rear. The 2.00m by 1.10m bed comes courtesy of a slide-out platform with mattress.

There is pumped cold water with removable fresh and waste tanks that hold 15 litres each. Cooking is

on the gas two-burner hob, while washing up is taken care of in the stainless-steel sink with black glass lid. There's a portable 12V/230V, 14-litre capacity fridge for food.

There are three trim levels for the Now's Ford base, starting with Style which features 16-inch alloys, heated manual door mirrors, dual sliding rear doors, daytime running lights, ESC and EBA (Emergency Brake Assist), immobiliser and remote central locking. In Style spec, the Danbury Now fixed-roof camper starts at £19,345 (powered by the 99bhp 1-litre EcoBoost three-cylinder petrol engine with

six-speed manual gearbox). A 1.5-litre 99bhp Duratorq diesel with five-speed 'box costs £600 extra.

Zetec trim (from £20,995) adds electric, heated door mirrors, front foglights, a heated windscreen and rear privacy glass, while a 118bhp diesel is also offered on this spec.

Finally, the Titanium trim offers fancy alloys, a panoramic roof and rear privacy glass, high-gloss chrome headlamp bezels, integrated roof rails, Active City Stop, rear parking sensors, Auro headlamps and rain-sensing wipers. These diesel-only models start at £23,045 for the 99bhp version, with an

automatic 118bhp version topping the price list at £25,195.

The Danbury Fun (above, right) – on the larger, T6-rivalling, Transit Custom – heads into more traditional campervan territory with its rising roof, but still has an eye on versatility as a daily driver. Its compact kitchen unit is placed behind the driver's seat and features a 50-litre compressor fridge and two-burner gas hob. The three-seater rear bench folds flat electrically to create the generous 1.95m by 1.47m bed. Furniture is available in a variety of colours, including the prototype's bold



The Go has been redesigned since its launch earlier this year

new

bright red, and the illuminated splashback adds a touch of style. A Porta Potti goes under the rear seat and there are wardrobe and storage cupboards for your stuff.

The Fun has two base vehicle trim options, Base or Trend. The former offers central locking, CD/radio with Bluetooth, trip computer, electric front windows, eight-way adjustable driver's seat with armrest and headlights with courtesy delay. Pricing is from £33,999 with the 2.2-litre 99bhp diesel engine.

Trend trim adds full wheeltrims, projector-style headlamps, front

foglights, power-fold mirrors, rain-sensing wipers, automatic headlamps, front and rear parking sensors, cruise control, a 10-way adjustable driver's seat, Ford Sync radio system, leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearknob, heated windscreen and lockable glovebox. The Trend spec comes with 99, 123 or 153bhp diesel motors, starting at £34,999.

Full-on camping comes with the Danbury Go, which has been redesigned since its launch at the

February NEC show (see May issue). The Go offers the classic side galley layout with a two-person crash-tested rear seat in either fixed or sliding form. Again, it folds into a bed electrically.

The Go has enhanced kitchen facilities with a three-burner gas hob, grill and oven. Equipment includes a 110Ah leisure battery

and a swivel passenger cab seat. The sink area has an illuminated splashback which can optionally include a flatscreen TV.

As with the Fun, Go comes with Base (99bhp diesel only, from £35,999) or Trend (from £36,999) trim levels on the base vehicle.

All three of the new models come with a three-year warranty.



Looks like an estate car but it's ready to go camping – Danbury Now



Now has its kitchen under the rear tailgate – just add an awning



Fun is a weekender-type campervan with three-seater rear bench

Danbury Motorcaravans' Director, Chris Jones, told *Which Motorhome*, "We are very pleased to be making campervans based on two of the best brands in the automotive industry. Danbury has had a very long and good association with Volkswagen and to now have the Ford Motor Company on board is fantastic. This will give Danbury an exciting new foothold in the first-time market with the excellent new Ford Connect and Transit Custom. First-time buyers are very cost-conscious and these buyers look very favourably at the excellent value-for-money Ford-based Danbury range. For example, a Danbury Ford campervan with identical specification to a VW T6 can cost up to £5k less."





Fold-away table for motorhomes

One of the more unusual innovations at this autumn's motorhome shows came courtesy of Italian companies, Project 2000 and Tecnoform. This is a dinette table that is housed in an aluminium covering on the wall. The table slides up and out and has two flip-out wings that

further extend the surface. There are no supporting legs, making it easy to get around. When the table is no longer required it simply folds over and can be slid back in. The table was showcased in the Fiat Ducato 4x4 Expedition concept motorhome that was on the Fiat Professional

stand at the NEC show.

David Nardini, CEO of Project 2000, said, "We have developed this table together with Tecnoform and are very satisfied with this partnership. The possibility to free, with a single movement, the dinette from the obstruction of the table opens new scenarios in the

research for space onboard. When not needed, in fact, the table limits the habitability and represents an obstruction. This is clear to the British, who have the habit of removing the table and putting it in the wardrobe. Now, even they will have a more simple solution for this purpose."

EUROPEAN RULE CHANGES HOW PAYLOAD FIGURES ARE CALCULATED

The amount of available payload specified in the brochures of UK-built motorhomes is expected to increase for 2016 models, thanks to a change in the rules and regulations set down by the European Standards Committee. This has come about because the European Standard for Motorhome Payload is in conflict with the European Directive for the Masses and Dimensions of Vehicles. As the Directive ranks higher in European law-making, the Standard has now been withdrawn.

The reason this makes a difference is because the Directive itself has recently changed in how it takes into consideration water when travelling. Most British manufacturers have previously quoted available payload figures when fresh water tanks were at full capacity. As one litre of water weighs one kilogramme, this often resulted in as much as 100kg being removed from the available payload. The new wording in the Directive says that the manufacturer can specify how much water is in the tanks when calculating a Mass in Running Order figure, and thus the available payload.

David Whitehead of the National Caravan Council (NCC), the trade body for motorhome manufacturers, confirmed that when British manufacturers update their Type Approval for 2016 launches, they will be able to specify available payload with no water on board, which will push the figures up. For the customer it means that even more care must be taken when ordering a new vehicle and assessing the adequacy of its payload, because, in reality, few will travel without water onboard. Ensure you are fully aware how the payload has been calculated (and how much – if any – water is included) before you buy.

Renault goes the extra mile

The Renault Trafic – as converted into a campervan by CMC Reimo and Hillside – has triumphed as the best-performing light commercial vehicle at the 2015 MPG Marathon, winning the title Best Percentage Improvement (compared to manufacturer's claimed economy figures) in the LCV category.

The MPG Marathon is a gruelling two-day economy challenge designed to put fuel economy claims under the spotlight. Renault's Trafic Energy dCi 120 Sport achieved an overall economy figure of 57.65mpg – some 20% higher than the Trafic's official EU combined cycle figure of 47.9mpg.

See page 70 for a test of the Hillside Ellastone, based on the Renault Trafic.

Chausson expands its dealer network in UK

French manufacturer, Chausson, has announced that Simpsons Motorcaravans of Great Yarmouth has been appointed as a dealer for its 2016 ranges. Jeff Kenrick, Commercial Director UK for Chausson, explained, "The initial demo order will be produced in April as we are sold out until then, such is the success of Chausson in the UK, despite having one of the biggest automotive production plants in Europe, with five production lines."

Simpsons is based on the Norfolk coast and stocks major brands such as Auto-Sleepers, Auto-Trail, Elddis, Rapido and Swift.



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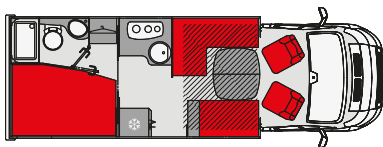
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2016 Star product: P716P

Best coachbuilt motorhome
Length: 7,15 m
Payload: up to 530 kg

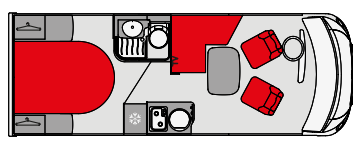


Galaxy
A-CLASS



2016 Star product: G650C

Central bed with SMART bathroom
Length: 6,49m
Payload: up to 590 kg

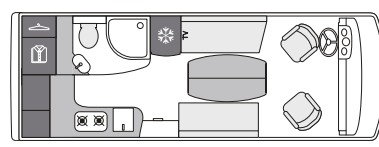


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EASY WASTE WATER DUMPING AT CARAVAN CLUB SITES

The Caravan Club has developed a new motorhome waste point that allows members to empty grey waste without lifting a manhole cover. The existing method is to position your vehicle over a manhole after removing the heavy lid, which can be difficult for members to lift. The other problem associated with this is that motorhomes can have the grey waste disposal point on the left, right or middle of the 'van, which then requires you to manoeuvre over the manhole and, dependent on the type and size of vehicle, may mean you blocking the road.

The new waste point is a drive-through design with an open grille, making it easy to manoeuvre over. The black waste is positioned behind the open grid but, unfortunately, this still requires a manhole due to environmental regulations, although few 'vans dispose of black (toilet) waste direct from the unit.

This new standard has been adopted at Brecon Beacon, Brighton, Seacroft and Chester Fairoaks, with more sites to follow in 2016.

Dolphin picks up Bessacarr motorhome range

Hampshire-based motorhome dealer, Dolphin, has announced that it is to stock the Swift Bessacarr motorhome range at

its Southampton branch. The Bessacarr range has been one of Swift Group's best sellers, offering a high level of specification as standard. Further enhancements for 2016 include a new DAB radio with mirror antenna and 100W solar panel (40W on the Bessacarr 424). All models will be fitted with the Lux Pack, adding cab air-conditioning, cruise control and a Status 570 TV aerial.

All Bessacarrs come with a Tracker Retrieve Thatcham-approved tracking system and Swift Group's 10-year body integrity warranty.



National Motorhome Awards 2016

The shortlist of contenders for this year's most coveted motorhome awards has been announced. The team of judges, lead by *Which Motorhome's* Editor, Peter Vaughan, has been busy looking at every new motorhome released for the 2016 season and, starting with a list of nearly 200 models, this has been whittled down to a shortlist of four motorhomes for



each category. The contenders are below.

The December edition of *MMM* magazine has more details on each of

the shortlisted contenders and both *Which Motorhome* and *MMM* will carry full results and details of the winners in their respective February 2016 issues. Until then, can you guess who has triumphed in each category?

CAMPERVAN

- Danbury Fun
- Hillside Castleton
- Wellhouse Terrier II
- Westfalia Club Joker City

FIXED DOUBLE BED COACHBUILT

- Knaus Sky Ti 650 MF Silver Selection
- Pilote Pacific P650C
- Rapido 650FF
- Rimor Seal 12P

HIGH-TOP VAN CONVERSION

- Auto-Trail V-Line SE 635
- HymerCar Ayers Rock
- Knaus BoxLife 600
- Westfalia Amundsen 600 E

FIXED SINGLE BED COACHBUILT

- Benimar Mileo 264
- Chausson 737 (Ford)
- Knaus Sky Ti 700 MEG Silver Selection
- Pilote Pacific P650GJ

COMPACT COACHBUILT

- Bailey Approach Advance 615
- Benimar Mileo 231
- Hymer Van 314 SL
- Itineo LB600

NON-FIXED BED COACHBUILT

- Bailey Approach Advance 635
- Bürstner Ixeo it 680 G
- Chausson 620 (Ford)
- Dethleffs 4-Travel T 6966-4

FAMILY MOTORHOME

- Adria Coral XL Plus 670 DK
- Rimor Katamarano 9
- Rimor Koala Elite 722
- Roller Team Auto-Roller 707

LUXURY MOTORHOME

- Bürstner Elegance i 840 G
- Dethleffs Esprit I 7150-2 EB
- Hymer ML-I 620
- Pilote Premium LV6.8LF

NEXT MONTH

JANUARY ISSUE ON SALE 10 DECEMBER

FORD SPECIAL

With driver appeal and pricing advantages there's never been a better time to buy Ford. We examine all the models available...

ROLLER TEAM ZEFIRO 696

The latest Italian low-profile gets the Star Test treatment



VW value

Think you can't afford a VW camper? Think again. A brand new conversion of a pre-owned T5 van can bring prices tumbling down to our target of £35k – less than a well-specified BMW 3-Series. Here are 13 options to tempt you...



SIXTY years is a long time to be in the campervan game. But that's how far Volkswagen goes back – to a time when you could buy a brand new Westfalia for £1,000 and still have a few shillings, farthings and florins in your pocket. Today, a budget of £50,000 will get you a decent specification, all-new Volkswagen California, its direct descendant, based on the Transporter in its latest T6 guise.

But there are alternatives that cost a whole lot less. The 13 vehicles parading before you here are actually fulfilling a booming demand – for new conversions on pre-owned T5 Transporters. That's why we've put our focus on vehicles in the £30,000-£35,000 bracket, with the facelifted T5 (sometimes referred to as the T5.5, which came in at the end of 2009) as

the starting point for each conversion. Admittedly, that still leaves lots of base vehicle variations in terms of engine power and specification. But what we're more interested in is a snapshot of the type of conversion work you can expect from any of the manufacturers represented here.

Flair on a shoestring? Something like that. Also worth noting is that nearly every converter here is happy to make small tweaks to original designs, drawers instead of lockers, shelves instead of hanging space in the wardrobe, and more.

Do bear in mind, too, that it's the base vehicle's age, condition and specification that have a huge bearing on the final price. We've levelled the playing field a bit by quoting a starting price for the conversion only

Words Nick Harding,
pictures Dave Hurrell



(where manufacturers provide such a service).

If nothing else, we've certainly proved there's a huge array of choice out there. And we do fully advise you choose carefully. None of the following (except, probably, the Bilbo's) will hold their value like a T5 California – the only camper that VW builds itself. But some will come close. A basic rule applies – the more bespoke you want your finished camper, the more likely it will prove difficult to sell on (and we do all come to that point eventually).

EMISSIONS UPDATES?

Between completing this Showdown and its final write-up, the news broke of the emissions scandal involving products from Volkswagen.

Some VW vans may be affected by this news and, at the time of writing we were still awaiting definitive updates from Volkswagen UK.

However, either you or the converter can enter the T5's VIN details on the website at volkswagen.co.uk/owners/dieselinfo to give you an instant response as to whether the van is affected or not, and then advise you on the next steps you can take.

As we went to press, Autohaus, Bilbo's, Dolphin (suppliers of the Auto-Sleeper), Ecowagon, Nomad, Rolling Homes, Stowford, VW Kamper Centre (Hillside) and Volksleisure all confirmed that their vehicles shown here are **not** affected by this situation and we hear from various sources that no T5s at all are affected. Let's go camping...



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2011 Autohaus Ashton – Somerset style in black and red

£35,495



Black furniture includes top lockers over the galley



Table clips onto a rail on the front of the kitchen

FOR

- Distinctive styling
- Good quality fittings and fitments generally

AGAINST

- Beware too dark interiors!
- Some raw edges to the upholstery finishing

HERE'S a company that's currently really going for it in the camper market. And it's doing it with a bit of swagger, too. Autohaus sells direct from its Somerset manufacturing base, as well as via the VW Kamper Centre, which delivered this all-red example for review, and offers all such conversions with a 12-month warranty, as well as any balance on the original three-year warranty for the T5 itself.

Retailers also include Thompson Leisure (in Northern Ireland) and hire specialist Freedhome. VWKC keeps prices down by offering a standard

conversion package, but at Autohaus itself there's a freer rein for more bespoke variations.

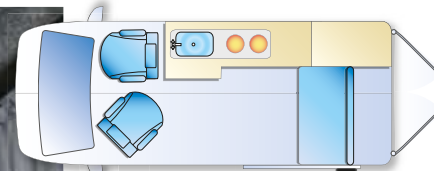
It certainly goes about things 'the right way', with its plans for Type Approval, safety testing, and so on. But who buys a lipstick-red campervan with an equally eye-catching black and red interior scheme? A fair few folk, it seems, according to VWKC, which cites Autohaus as the most popular marque it sells.

This all-red 42,000-miler has barn doors at the back, as do so many campervans that start their life in a less glamorous role. It's a complementary, distinctive leather upholstery inside, and even the

sliding door trim has been finished in black. All manner of other colour schemes – exterior and interior – are available, of course. But we can only judge on what's put in front of us and, here, the finish of the upholstery for the cab seat headrests was not so impressive. There's still lots of (now dated looking) carpet lining, too, including the rear wheelarches.

The main furniture colour is also black (a woodgrain finish called Hacienda), all built in-house and with durable edge-banded trim (as opposed to knock-on plastic favoured by some), with a shaped main furniture unit that's little more





The bed isn't very big – the roof bed is actually bigger!



Fridge hides behind a door with shelves



Rear boot space is pretty generous

than the depth of the Smev two-ring hob and sink combination unit at its narrowest. A Smev oven/grill steals a lot of kitchen storage space, even though there are a couple of extra lockers above the cooker and two floor lockers (the right-hand one housing the RCD).

Storage includes a small locker above and beyond the back seat. Instead of actual catches, all locker doors have a push-to-open function. We wonder how those will last the test of time.

Needless to say, in an example like this the interior is not going to be light, especially with the roof down. In fact, it can seem extremely

gloomy, though lots of LED lighting helps lift things a bit.

Note, also, the Autohaus-branded electrical control panel. Reading lights haven't been forgotten, either. Other fittings include Webasto heating, two lots of double mains sockets and typical camper window curtains (arguably the best type for such vehicles as they're not just effective in their blackout, but also take up minimal space).

That Reimo roof has a bed fitting, giving this 'van a four-berth status. It's the usual thin mattress up there, but the overall dimensions are decent.

The mains connection tucked under the rear bumper has pluses and minuses. In its favour, it means there's no need to cut a hole in the bodywork, and there's no unsightly panel; the minus is some folk won't like bending down to plug in the mains lead. Details, details.

It's only the 82bhp (84PS) engine here, although supplying retailer, the VW Kamper Centre, says it gets an occasional request to provide power upgrades. (Do discuss that with your insurance company first.) Reversing sensors are a plus, but no air-conditioning will mark down the base vehicle for most buyers.

FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28

PRICES FROM £39,995 (all-new) £25,000 (pre-owned T5)

CONVERSION ONLY FROM N/a

PRICE AS TESTED £35,495

EXTRAS FITTED None

TYPE APPROVAL Small Series

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.01m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES Lower 1.78m x 1.08m, upper 1.95m x 1.10m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,800kg

PAYLOAD 425kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 82bhp

ABOUT AUTOHAUS

Established in 1995, it's been VW all the way for Autohaus, with models Ashton, Camelot, Spartan and Quinte in its portfolio – the latter an unusual, U-shaped rear lounge layout (see December 2013 issue). Annual production of its VW campers has just topped 130, and all the signs are of continued, consistent growth. An interesting, more recent departure is the Fiat Ducato-based Kingston. The company is also forging ahead with plans for European Whole Vehicle Type Approval. Each Autohaus conversion also comes with a three-year warranty.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

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Which motorhome says ★★★★★

A well put together conversion from an emerging company that isn't afraid to turn on the style.



Freedom noun | free·dom \ˈfrē-dəm\

1. The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint:

Example: Having the freedom of choice allowing you to consider various manufacturers of VW campervans, finding the one that not only satisfies your needs for comfort and style but more importantly gives you a palpable feeling of excitement in your tummy at the prospect of owning it.

Usage: 'The couple discovered a new sense of freedom as they set off in their new Autohaus campervan, bringing back memories of courting, long weekends away together and the time before they became a drop off point for grandchildren.'

2. The state of not being imprisoned or enslaved:

Example: Deciding that sitting in a tailback on the motorway attempting to reach your destination is both depressing and blatantly goes against the culture of owning a campervan, choosing instead to discover the freedom of a narrow B-Road 'Just to see where it goes'.

Usage: Whilst the road leading down to the coastline was narrow, the Autohaus campervan was agile and afforded the

couple a sense of freedom not found in the larger coach-built motorhomes.

3. Unrestricted use of something

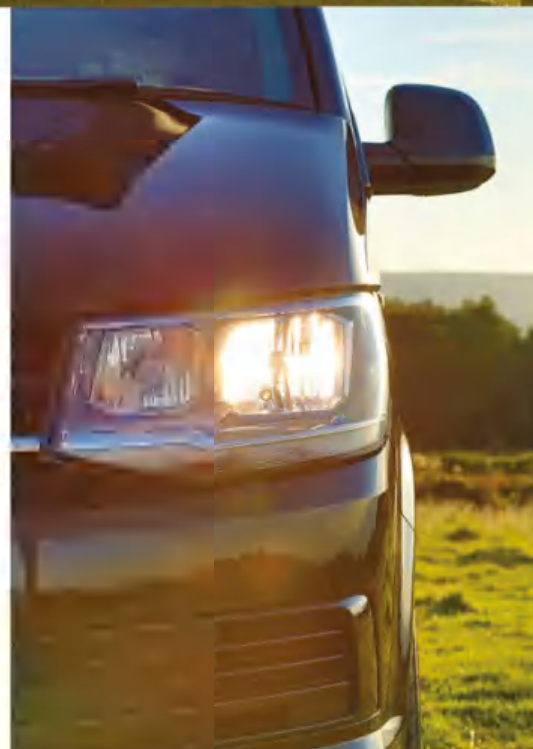
Example: With over 19,000 miles of coastline and 120 mountain peaks, the British Isles affords campervan owners the freedom to travel up hill and down dale, taking a holiday whenever the moment takes them.

Usage: As they cruised at an altitude of 2199 feet through the Cairnwell Pass they were reminded of how wonderful it was to experience the freedom of taking regular holidays in their Autohaus campervan, without the need for a passport, or 'placing items of liquid up to 100ml in a small plastic, resealable bag'.

4. The power of self-determination attributed to the will; the quality of being independent of fate or necessity:

Example: Shedding the routine of staying in the same Spanish hotel year on year in favour of exploring the great British countryside and discovering the freedom, scenery, culture, food and ale that exists on our very doorstep.

Usage: Determined to prove that adventure and freedom are not solely for the young they decided to be bold and stay for another night.



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FOR

- Permanent gas tank
- Easy-to-make bed



AGAINST

- No rear head restraints, low backrest
- Narrow bed
- Looking dated in places



Whale gas heating and boiler



Ugly vents spoil the looks



MEET an old friend that's been a bit revitalised. Auto-Sleepers produced its first Trooper when Volkswagen's T4 came to light in 1991 – a time when it was top of the tree for camper conversions. And ironically, while Trooper no longer features in the Auto-Sleeper portfolio of new models (only long-wheelbase T6 high-top Topaz remains), it hasn't stopped the company dusting off the old design files and supplying conversions to a small selection of retailers who source their own T5s. So, you'll see new Trooper conversions of pre-owned T5s on the forecourts at Marquis Leisure

(with its 11 branches throughout England), as well as Motor Plus in Derby and Dolphin Motorhomes, which has branches in Southampton and Christchurch, Dorset. Dolphin supplied this example, but it also retails Pursuit Sports, which are produced exclusively for Dolphin by a local converter (and are arguably aimed at a younger audience).

Earlier Troopers used Auto-Sleepers' own design of solid-sided elevating roof. Here, it's Reimo's altogether less complex (and less draughty) rear-hinged unit. It's easier to push up and pull back down again, but we did note the

canvas had a slight tear where it had caught in the scissor-action hinges. This is a rare occurrence on such roofs (it was a more widespread problem with some of Reimo's rivals). Of course, it's always a good idea to have at least the sliding door open when lowering these roofs, so that the air has somewhere to escape.

Inside, it's a standard VW camper floorplan, although fitting the back seat further towards the rear does give you optimum floor space (at the expense of boot space) – and also allows you to access the fridge when the bed is down.

Latest Troopers use a Whale heating system

Trooper – a Dolphin update



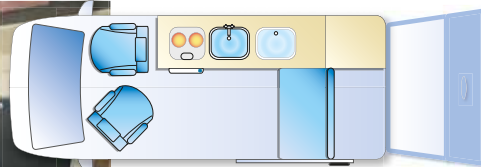
There's a grill and a three-way fridge here



The only place to store a loo is in the boot



Bed is easy to make and comfy, but only if you're very thin



FACT FILE

BASED ON	Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28
PRICES FROM	£39,995
CONVERSION ONLY FROM	N/a
PRICE AS TESTED	£39,995
EXTRAS FITTED	None
TYPE APPROVAL	European Whole Vehicle
DIMENSIONS	4.89m L, 1.90m VW, 2.01m H
BERTHS	2
TRAVEL SEATS	4
BED SIZES	1.88m x 1.10m
MAXIMUM WEIGHT	2,800kg
PAYLOAD	400kg
ENGINE	2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT AUTO-SLEEPERS

Does the company need an introduction? In its day, by far the largest converter of VW campers in the UK, although now the emphasis is on Peugeot Boxer-based high-tops as far as van conversions are concerned. And, while it's unlikely that Auto-Sleepers will ever be a major force in VW campers again, its recent dabbling with Mercedes Vito conversions suggests it still has its eye on the campervan sector.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

DOLPHIN MOTORHOMES
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WEB dolphinmotorhomes.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★☆☆☆

It's a slightly strange mix of traditional and a bit of modern, making this Trooper hard to pigeonhole. But Dolphin specifying the Highline T5 makes for a proper leisure vehicle feel.

and, while that Dometic fridge may seem a bit old hat, it has three-way operation (230V, gas and, while travelling only, 12V), and is silent when operating. There's a longer run of kitchen worktop than most, although it's a bit unusual to see a separate drainer in a vehicle like this. It robs you of worktop space, so we'd rather not have it.

The low-backed rear seat remains, too. It may have safety-tested certification, but upper back and head protection are non-existent. On the plus side, it's one of the easiest beds to make up here – it simply glides out flat – although it's very narrow (a direct result of the wider-than-average

furniture unit). There is also the option to add a 1.91m x 1.21m roof bed.

Dolphin Motorhomes sources Highline versions of the T5 for its Troopers, so you get a lot of kit as standard – cab air-conditioning, 16in Volkswagen alloy wheels, cruise control, metallic paint, leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearlever, front foglights, Category 1 alarm, Bluetooth phone preparation, driver's seat armrests, rear parking sensors and colour-coded bumpers and mirrors.

But then there are aspects of the conversion that aren't so in keeping with more modern tastes

– the wood-effect trim to the dashboard and the concertina blind fittings for the side and rear windows, for example.

It's a high price here, too, although some of that can be offset by the fact that this will probably hold onto its value far better than some of the others here. To this day, Troopers carry badging to say that they're an approved conversion as far as the National Caravan Council (NCC) is concerned.

The big advantage, however, comes with a base vehicle as recent as this and a brand new conversion. It's all practically as good as new!



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2011 Bilbo's Nexa

a proven performer

£32,950



Good bedding storage under rear seats



The only camper here with this type of layout

FOR

- Proven design and resale value
- Highly practical

AGAINST

- Curtains are rather bulky in places
- Does a high roof look right on a T5?

THIS Nexa qualified for inclusion in our showdown because, although originally built as an all-new camper, at £32,950 this four-year-old is comfortably within our presumed budget. It's also based on the T5 as supplied exclusively to Volkswagen UK's 'approved' converters. And as it's only ever been a campervan, it will arguably have had an easier life than anything that was once a delivery van.

It's had just one previous owner. Plus the conversion really is as new, with no major changes to report, should you wish to order a brand new Nexa. Indeed, it's a good testament to the lasting

qualities of Bilbo's conversion work.

Bilbo's should need little introduction as a specialist converter of VWs that's also been at the forefront of the market for at least the last 10-15 years of its four-decade existence. It was also one of the first specialists to get European Whole Vehicle Type Approval for all of its range, back in 2012.

This is one of just three high-tops in this procession. It's a good reminder of the different dimensions such fittings add to a VW camper in terms of permanent headroom and additional storage. The loss of ability to get under car park height barriers is the only real downside, although

you might include appearance here, too.

But do note that plenty of converters, including Bilbo's, can offer a fixed high-top as well as the more standard elevating roof variants.

So, what extra storage do you get? There's a large, sliding door locker over the cab that's ideal for placing your bedding. Each side section comprises shelving, as well as push-button lockers and cubbyholes. Plus, there's double shelving over the tailgate that will come in handy when you're parked up. And there's a pair of side windows – double-glazed acrylic units with cassette blinds and flyscreens. Just carpet lining for insulation to the roof is a bit disappointing.





Kitchen has a three-burner hob and a Smev grill, as well as useful drawers



More practical loo storage and use in this layout



Single beds will divide opinion but they leave a centre aisle

The Nexa is certainly a different floorplan to what we'd regard as the 'traditional VW camper'. Here, there are four individual travel seats which combine to offer sleeping accommodation on twin single beds.

In daytime mode, swivelling each cab seat creates two single dinettes – with a table fitting to a side rail on the offside and a pivoting tabletop on the nearside that means access via the sliding door isn't restricted. When not needed, the latter folds away reasonably neatly, while the former straps to the back of the rear offside furniture unit, just inside the tailgate.

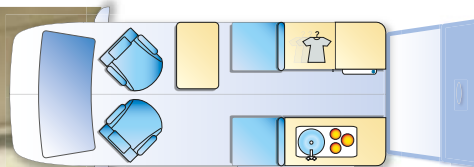
It's a layout that allows full walk-through, too. As you head towards the back, the main kitchen unit is

to your right, where you get a three-ring hob and sink that also manages to leave some valuable worktop, with an upstander section at the back to offer protection from splashes and drips.

There's also a Smev grill, while the rest of the unit is a handy mix of two drawers and a large cupboard. Across the galley is a Waeco CoolMatic compressor fridge, which is set at a convenient height for the chef. Its housing also means the floor locker immediately below it is spacious enough to host a large Porta Potti. Completing this nearside furniture unit is a wardrobe that provides both hanging space and shelving.

Bilbo's is a long-term adherent of using curtains, rather than any other form of campervan blackout, in the cab as well as throughout the living quarters. As ever, they're generously cut and lined, with press studs to hold them in place. The use of plastic mouldings is another indicator of Bilbo's more professional approach to its conversions. Note, also, the exterior's rubber side strips that are ideally placed to withstand those car park knocks.

This example comes with an MoT that runs to next March and a six-month warranty. The lack of cab air-conditioning could be the only deal-breaker on the T5 side of things.



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T30

PRICES FROM £38,290 (£39,290 on a T6)

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £14,950

PRICE AS TESTED £32,950

EXTRAS FITTED Metallic paint, privacy glass, mudflaps, auto-dimming rear view mirror, diesel-powered heating, awning rail, swivel table, rear speakers, Cab Comfort Pack

TYPE APPROVAL Pre-Type Approval (but Whole European from 2012)

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.46m H

BERTHS 2

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES Singles 1.80m x 0.61m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 800kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT BILBO'S

A long-term VW specialist with national best-seller status, Surrey-based Bilbo's has been making campers for nearly 40 years. Bilbo's does things its own way – offering a full portfolio of VW campers using its own side-hinged elevating roof, its own larger-than-average rear set/bed and more. It has full European Whole Vehicle Type Approval across its range. It has always sold direct, too. Today it offers a full line-up of all-new models based on the T6 and all Bilbo's conversions are National Caravan Council (NCC) approved.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

BILBO'S DESIGN

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Which motorhome says ★★★★★

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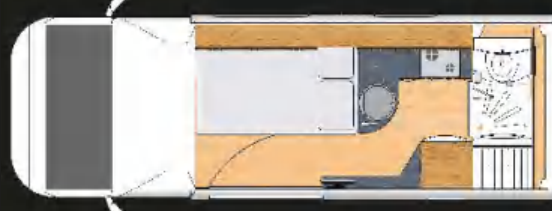
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2011 Danbury Surf

Bristol fashion

£34,995



Swivel double cab seat is a faff to operate



Small table sits on an island leg

FOR

- Dares to be a bit different
- Long and flat double bed is very comfy

AGAINST

- Lacks final refinement in some places
- Check that rear seat locking mechanism

HERE'S another company that's made its way to the top of the pile by offering something different. Very different, in this case – as Danbury's recent fortunes have been made by importing the last of the 'bay window' Volkswagen Type 2s from Brazil and converting them into UK-spec campers. If you want the classic looks (with 1970s driving characteristics, too), then you might still get one of the last new ones in the country.

Not so far behind, however, has been its production of campers on T5s, of which the Surf has been its lead model. This is the Bristol-based

company's take on the traditional VW camper floorplan, complete with its own elevating roof and rear seat designs.

That run of furniture is a bit different, too, in that it's partly L-shaped, with the end section housing a triangular sink set over an angled tambour door that opens up to reveal a rather handy slide-out, low-level worktop-cum-coffee-table. In turn, the unit here also houses a Waeco 50-litre compressor fridge.

The cooker is one you won't see anywhere else these days, either (at least, not in a recently converted camper). It's a standard two-ring hob,

and its surroundings are fitted with heat-reflecting metal, but the big bonus for many will be the fact it also provides a small grill. The downside is that it looks very old hat.

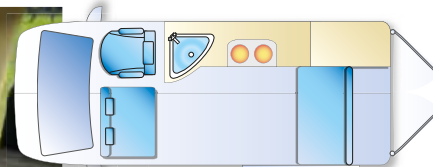
A couple of slide-out lockers to its left are evidence of some neat storage solutions. And the wardrobe at the back, with hanging rail, looks capable of holding plenty.

Elsewhere, the décor is a mix of modern tambour doors for the lockers and a light wood furniture finish. Other colours for the cabinets, including some bold shades and a choice of soft furnishings are available, of course. In fact,





Neat slide-out storage for tins is a plus. Cooker looks old-fashioned but includes a grill



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28

PRICES FROM £36,995 (all new)

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £15,695

PRICE AS TESTED £34,995

EXTRAS FITTED Alloy wheels, colour-coded bumpers and spoiler, privacy glass (£2,000), side bars (£495), double cab seat swivel (£499)

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.00m H

BERTHS 2

TRAVEL SEATS 5

BED SIZES 1.98m x 1.09m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,800kg

PAYLOAD 860kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 82bhp

ABOUT DANBURY

Danbury currently claims to be the UK's largest VW converter – but prefers not to be drawn on numbers. Draw your own conclusions, but do go and see for yourselves. This Surf was one of nearly 20 used T5 Danburys on sale at the company's Yate, near Bristol, manufacturing and retailing premises at the time of writing. As well as this Surf, the Trail, Active and Royale models are also available on T5, carrying over to T6 now, too.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

DANBURY

TEL 01454 310000

WEB danburymotorcaravans.com



Watch your fingers when folding down the bed



Less room for bedding here than in some rivals

Danbury's work starts with the offer to fully glaze a customer-supplied T5 panel van to motorhome specification, from £999.

A swivelling double seat for cab passengers brings this up to five places for travel, but it's just the standard accommodation for two as tested (although a £599 roof bed can be retro-fitted). Frankly, if you need a five-seater, we'd recommend going for a camper with a wider rear seat. The double cab seat is fiddly to swivel and the fittings do not inspire confidence. It prevents walk-through from the cab, too.

That roof is easy to operate, though, needing

just the gentlest of pushes to get it up.

The rear seat, meanwhile, is set further back than most, helping to optimise floor space. The downside of this, however, is there's less luggage room inside the barn doors.

You just need to be a bit careful, too, where you put your fingers when you're pushing that bed down flat. That said, it easily drops into place, and is longer than most, as well as nice and flat once set up as a bed. It's also easy enough to return to seating mode, where it's supposed to self-lock into position for travel.

As for the base vehicle, the all-red appearance

may be racy – and indeed, further enhanced by those black 18in alloy wheels, spoilers front and back and chrome side rails – all courtesy of the Sport Pack option. But, it's only the 82bhp (84PS) engine under the bonnet. Performance might be considered acceptable, just, and it's certainly economical if you're not in a hurry. The base vehicle has done nearly 50,000 miles with its one previous owner.

Cab air-conditioning is absent on this particular example. And the manual window winders? That's what you get with the standard T28 version of the T5. Treat them as a retro touch!

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

An interesting take on the standard VW layout, but we feel there's still some room for further refinement.

This one is good for camping



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www.danburymotorcaravans.com
01454 310 000

*Danbury VW T5 Transporter 2010, 40,000 miles, 5 seat Surf conversion. Subject to availability.



2012 Dirty Weekender



£35,000



FOR

- The sky's the limit
- Choice, choice, choice



AGAINST

- The more bespoke it is, the harder it can be to sell on



Unusual graphic on fridge door



Even the boot area has carpet



THIS is so unique it has no model name as such, although few will forget the company title. Stop giggling at the back!

A walk around the outside can give you an indication of what you can have on your T5 when you ask Dirty Weekender to convert it. That's VW's distinctive Toffee Brown metallic paint finish, which is proving popular with campervan buyers. Then there are the six-spoke alloy wheels, the chrome side bars, daytime running lights and plenty more.

And that Reimo roof. Just take a look at the artwork on the top (see the concluding page of this

feature on page 57: the Dirty Weekender is the fifth camper from the right). It's a wrap finish and you can actually have any design you want.

The same applies inside, where a wrap can be applied to the furniture and, again, the only limit is your imagination.

Dirty Weekender says that typically it uses Reimo furniture kits – but the much-lower-than-usual units supplied here are its own, featuring a high-gloss black finish to birch ply that's post-formed and pre-laminated.

Beware black, though. It may be easy enough to wipe clean, but it does tend to show up the marks,

inside or out. Ditto the fixed carpet underfoot – it's a durable enough, automotive quality, and even extends into the tailgate area, but we suspect most folk will prefer the easier cleaning practicalities of vinyl (you can still add loose carpet to that, of course). As ever, it's your decision, especially with converters as flexible as this.

Elsewhere, the only thing that's standard is the normal VW camper layout, with fittings such as Smev's two-ring gas hob and sink combination and a small Vitrifrigo 37-litre fridge (hidden behind a black door to match the rest of the furniture). At the kitchen window, there's a

der – blackout time



rather smart Venetian blind that tucks up neatly out of sight in the recess above – it's Dirty Weekender's own design. Elsewhere, there are magnetic cab curtains – yet another neat touch – and snug-fitting Van-X curtains for all the other windows.

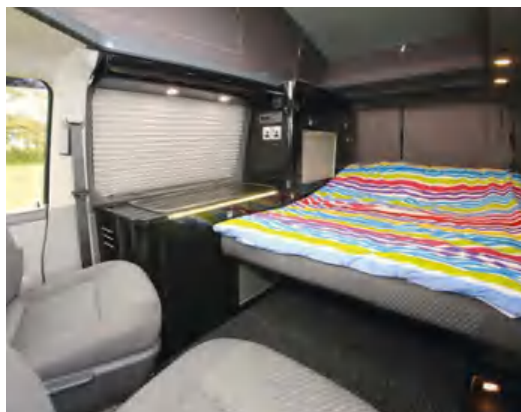
The rear seat is a standard, fixed (ie non-sliding) RIB unit (despite most of Dirty Weekender's work being with Reimo products). On this example, the only access to the underseat storage is by pulling up the squab – but, again, this is what the customer wanted. We'd recommend that you go for something more versatile.



Low unit, gloss finish, familiar Smev fittings



The tambour doors come with locks on them. Not sure why!



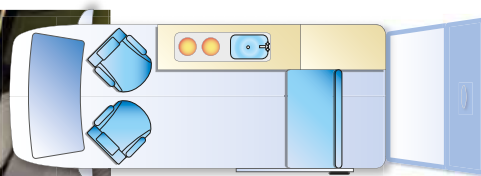
Bed is a bit short, but Venetian blind looks good

The arrangement here also means storage space inside the tailgate is limited. Worth knowing with the RIB unit, though, is that the section at the head end (nearest the tailgate) can be reclined to any angle – great if you want to sit up in bed. And useful if you want to carry taller loads behind the back seat.

Above, there's no roof bed (it's an option), but what you do get when the roof's up is a very handy storage ledge.

There's also lots of LED lighting throughout (again, you ask, Dirty Weekender will say yes).

The T5 base has been spec'd up to Highline



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £20,000

PRICE AS TESTED £35,000

EXTRAS FITTED Full bespoke service

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.89m H

BERTHS 2

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES 1.78m x 1.12m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,800kg

PAYLOAD 850kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT DIRTY WEEKENDER

A small team working in extensive premises push out some 60 campers like this each year. The Worcester-based company, whose background in racing inevitably ended up being combined with camping, sums itself up thus: "We very strongly believe that no two people/couple/family need or want the same carbon copy. This does not mean we only build weird and wonderful, though!" Also on-site is a Reimo superstore, so you can browse exactly the items you want fitted to your camper – or buy them to add yourself.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

DIRTY WEEKENDER ADVENTURE VANS

TEL 01905 353880

WEB dirty-weekender.com

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

The most bespoke vehicle in this Showdown, Dirty Weekender's appeal lies with those who know what they want – and what they want is a highly individualistic camper.

level, with features such as cruise control, air-conditioning, leather steering wheel, VW's Cab Comfort Pack, plus VW Sportline alloy wheels and spoilers, reversing sensors, mudflaps and plenty more. All that's missing is the electronic trip meter.

It's all rather overwhelming. No doubt about it, this is something of a showstopper. It's also highly individualistic – so it should be no surprise to hear this was all as commissioned by a highly delighted Dirty Weekender customer. But it's a great example of what this company can offer. Just remember resale when ordering a 'van like this.



2011 Ecowagon Ulti



FOR

- Distinctive and exclusive furniture
- Lots of good ideas backed up by quality construction



AGAINST

- Still needs some final refinements
- Gas/water/battery storage arrangement needs sorting



Even boot area has a tambour door



Table is more stable with Sequoia fitting



SPOTTED the Ecowagon in our pictures? Not from the front, perhaps, but definitely from the back, with its tailgate open. That lime green furniture is a real eye-opener.

There's plenty more out-of-the-box thinking here, although the floorplan plays it relatively safe with a standard furniture along the side and rear bench seat/bed formula.

This example is based on a T5 with the highly desirable 138bhp engine and six-speed manual gearbox, with a cab that includes air-con, as well as a stereo upgrade.

Ecowagon tends towards sustainability,

although it has fitted a German SCA Deluxe rising roof. It's the model with a slatted bed base that offers just that bit more bedtime comfort.

The rear seat is UK-sourced, though. From Bristol specialist company, Smart Beds, it has a particularly easy operation for converting from seating to the flattest of mattresses. It's longer than most, too, at 1.93m, albeit not as wide as it could be.

As ever, there's some compromise in the rear seat/bed. Here, the squab is rather short. However, the whole fitting has a really neat five-stage process whereby you can adjust the rake of the

backrest. Actual backrest height isn't as tall as it looks, either, although you can specify slot-in head restraints – you'll need to if you're going to carry adults in the back.

To complement the seating, the table is a Sequoia system, which has a twist-in pedestal leg for excellent stability, with both the tabletop and leg stowing away behind the driver's seat. The swivels for the cab seats are courtesy of Sportscraft.

If you think you recognise that upholstery... well, the cloth insert is in fact an original Westfalia pattern from the German firm's bay-window campers of the 1970s. With its brown leather (a

mate Explorer – lime time



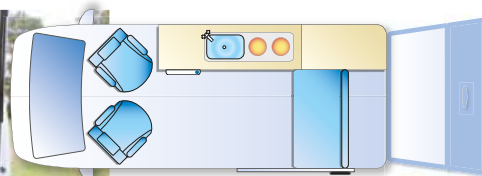
We loved lime green furniture and '70s check trim



Plenty of worktop at the forward end of the galley



No side window to the rear of the sliding door



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T32

PRICES FROM £26,995

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £10,000

PRICE AS TESTED £32,995

EXTRAS FITTED Diesel heating (£795), solar panel (£350), leather upholstery (£1,550), overhead and side lockers with LED lighting (£1,345), roof bars (£250)

TYPE APPROVAL Pending

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.98m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES Lower 1.93m x 1.12m, upper 2.00m x 1.30m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,200kg

PAYLOAD 750kg (estimated)

ENGINE 2-litre, 138bhp

ABOUT ECOWAGON

Ecowagon is a brand name of Northshore T4, which was founded six years ago. Boss, Kenny Green, admits he's produced more T4 campers than T5s, half joking that he's been "messing around with campers for ten years now", then quickly adding, "But we're aiming for the highest standards." The line-up of models goes through Economy, Day Van and Combo before you get to the Ultimate Explorer.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

ECOWAGON

TEL 01209 697389

WEB ecowagon.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

A very promising attempt to do things a bit differently. Sure, there are a few raw edges here, but these are partly outweighed by all the good ideas.

reconstituted product) trimwork, it all adds to the individuality. And yes, it does go particularly well with the furniture finish.

There's definitely a solid feel to that furniture, too. It's all made in-house by Ecowagon, with noteworthy aspects like the slight curve to the section just inside the back door.

Meanwhile, the kitchen's focal point is a two-ring hob and sink from Can, with the latter to the left, but with the whole unit set as far towards the rear as possible – leaving a lot of marble-style worktop behind the driver's chair.

Aft of this, the base of the wardrobe is home to

a fresh water carrier, leisure battery and single gas cylinder. They're all placed together, where we'd expect – indeed, insist – that at least the gas cylinder has a dedicated locker of its own, for safety. The wardrobe looks like it lacks a hanging rail (or needs extra shelving), but Ecowagon reckons it never gets asked for such items – although, of course, it's perfectly happy to accommodate such requests.

As ever, it's always worth asking questions about what's under the skin. In keeping with its focus on environmental sustainability, Ecowagon uses recycled PET water bottles as a highly

effective insulation material.

Also among the fittings here is an MV heating system using the diesel fuel supply, plus some especially neat LED lighting. Ecowagon says a full conversion like this would set you back some £20,000, on top of the price of the base vehicle. However, it offers conversions from around half that price.

Type Approval is pending on this model. Strictly speaking, converters of pre-owned T5s don't need to go through any approval process, so you can take it as a sign of any company that is serious about its work.



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2011 Hillside Birchover out on a high

£32,495



Grill and fridge hide behind a hinged section



Cutlery holder recessed into the worktop

FOR

- Durable build quality
- Good storage

AGAINST

- Beware kitchen spillages

NOT all campervans have to have elevating roofs. A small proportion of buyers want a permanent high-top like this – typically, previous camper owners who have had enough of pushing up and pulling down a pop-top, or who just simply want the extra, permanent standing room and upper-level storage that a high roof affords, yet still expect the sheer driveability that any VW offers. A high-roof camper will also be better suited to winter camping.

Such roofs don't necessarily have much effect on performance or economy, either. All you really forego is that ability to slip under car park

height barriers or into a large domestic garage.

The neatly styled high-top seen here comes from Germany's SCA, which is also widely regarded as a leading exponent of elevating roofs (indeed, Hillside is among a significant number of UK agents for the brand).

Hillside also sets its store by RIB rear seats (which it also uses in its Nissan, Ford and Renault conversions), while another signature feature is the added curve-fronted door at the front of the furniture run. Hinge it open and it reveals some handy shelving, as well as the Waeco compressor fridge and Smev grill.

The kitchen top, meanwhile, is home to a familiar Smev hob and sink combination, in this instance with the two gas rings to the left. There's also a lip at the end of the worktop to offer some protection from spillages, although the back edge of this unit doesn't get such guarding, apart from the glass lids for the hob and sink.

Also, the worktop area to the right of the sink includes a lidded cutlery tray – another feature that we also felt could suffer if liquids get spilt, especially as the plastic tray in here cannot be lifted out. A proper pull-out cutlery drawer would be a worthwhile improvement to the





No windows in the roof but that rear locker will come in more than handy



Bedding can be stored above the cab, too



RIB seat allows a decent boot area

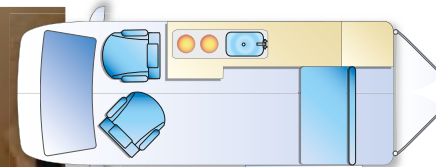
Birchover's design.

Extra kitchen storage comes in the form of a higher-level locker over the cutlery holder, with a short section of open shelving adjacent.

There's more storage in the base of the RIB seat, of course, accessed via the hinged squab or hatches in its base (where you can slide away a portable loo). Converting it into a bed takes a bit of practice before you can honestly say it's easy – and the RIB bed certainly isn't the longest, although you do get plenty of feet-dangling space at the forward end and the mattress itself is flat and firm.

Hillside has added non-VW opening windows to both sides of this Birchover (the roof lacks windows, unfortunately), with more traditional lined curtains for blackout and a bit of insulation. That curtain rail around the cab is rather old-style, too. Carpet trimwork is kept to a minimum, however. And lighting is the latest LEDs – energy-saving, more efficient, longer-lasting and, generally, brighter.

Open the back doors and there's a generous amount of boot space (especially with the rearmost mattress section raised to vertical), as well as a gas locker that's easy to access, plus an



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T30

PRICES FROM £26,995

CONVERSION ONLY FROM N/a

PRICE AS TESTED £32,495

EXTRAS FITTED None

TYPE APPROVAL European Whole Vehicle (pending)

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.57m H

BERTHS 2

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES 1.78m x 1.19m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 750kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT HILLSIDE

Here's another converter that, within the world of VW campers, counts as a mainstream producer. From its sizeable Derby base, Hillside produces campers based not just on VWs, but also the Renault Trafic, Ford Transit Custom and Nissan NV200. It was all started back in 2004 by brothers Mark and Adrian Cross. As well as its most popular Birchover – which is available in both high-top and elevating roof formats – Hillside's VW models include Thurlston, Doveridge, Cromford and Buxton. It always carries a generous range of stock, new and used, for viewing. Plus, it has appointed the VW Kamper Centre in Poole as an agent for the south of England.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

VW KAMPER CENTRE

TEL 01202 855531

WEB m-d-g.co.uk/vw-kamper-centre

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

Recent years have seen Hillside emerge as a strong contender in the market. Consistency has been a major factor in its rise, but it also helps to have a selection of its products on display at VWKC.

external shower fitting – useful with kids or dogs, or just muddy boots. The wardrobe above has just the single door access.

But, of course, it's the high-top that almost doubles the amount of storage space – with generous lockers fore and aft, plus deep shelving running along either side.

There's a reassuring solidness to Hillside's work that augurs well for long-term use. The colouring here could be seen by some as a bit mundane, but plenty of alternatives are available.

Warranty back-up is 12 months for both the base vehicle and the conversion.



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£31,500

2014 Nomad Camp



FOR

- Keenly priced
- Overall quality of conversion



AGAINST

- A few signs this was built for hire



Sliding seat – perfect for Ikea trips!



Table on cranked leg attached to seat



HERE'S another manufacturer that needs a bit of an introduction to explain how it tackles this T5 camper sector. Both this and the Ranger overleaf are fresh out of having done service on the hire fleet of sister company, Bunk Campers.

Needless to say, the experience of making campervans to withstand a hard life as hire vehicles, as well as customer feedback in this field, puts Nomad in good stead as far as manufacturing is concerned.

Camper is Nomad's most popular model and has a Reimo elevating roof. In metallic silver, an

instantly noticeable spin-off from its rental life is the lack of fancy exterior bodywork (although there's nothing to say you couldn't have such stuff added) – for example, they're the original unpainted plastic bumpers. Very practical, but not very pretty!

Inside, it's a standard camper floorplan, with a three-person Reimo Variotech 333 rear seat with a trio of three-point seatbelts and three adjustable head restraints. This comes on rails for optimum versatility in terms of seat location and floor space, both when you are on site and when you need rear luggage space. It also has a swivel table

on a cranked leg that moves with the seat base.

Nomad promises "motor industry grade velour carpet" for its linings, but you can see the bare edges and some of the ply backing on this example. There's also a fair amount of exposed painted metal on show (rear wheelarches, around the windows, etc) and a few holes in the metalwork that would look all the better if they were plugged.

Luckily, the silver paintwork complements the interior styling reasonably well, where the furniture is Vöhringer (the wider 15mm boarding that's veneered on both sides). Familiar features

er – ex-rental value



The familiar Smev hob and sink combo is used here



Kids will be happier travelling closer to mum and dad



Reimo seat makes a bed that's 1.10m wide

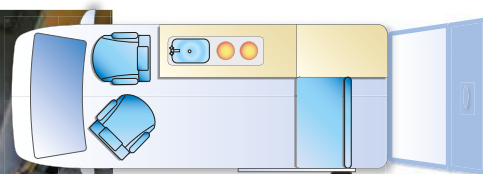
include Smev's two-ring hob and sink. Note their orientation: it's generally reckoned to be safer to have the sink nearest the driver's seat, as here. Waeco's CR50 compressor fridge is also part of the fittings.

There's plenty more to admire, too, some of it under the skin. Wiring is courtesy of leading exponent Würth, flooring is from Altro, insulation is Reimo's 10mm X-Trem Isolator foam (sides and floor) and there's a Propex gas-fired heating system.

More recent Campers use the basic Startline version of the T5. This earlier example has a

BlueMotion Technology 112bhp (114PS) engine which promises "to cut fuel consumption and reduce emissions" (we know what you're thinking) – thanks to features such as stop-start, brake energy recuperation, improved airflow, and cruise control. Surprisingly, it misses out on the sixth gear provided on the T5's two more powerful engines. The alloy wheels you can see here are also added after its rental period and prior to retailing.

Latest Campers also see a few changes – Webasto's diesel-powered heater is an option, for instance, as is the roof bed.

**FACT FILE**

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 BlueMotion T28

PRICES FROM £31,500

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £16,500

PRICE AS TESTED £31,500

EXTRAS FITTED Colour-coded roof (£550), awning channel (£200), Propex heater (£800), roof bed (£500)

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.98m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 5

BED SIZES Lower 1.83m x 1.10m, upper 2.00m x 1.25m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,800kg

PAYLOAD 860kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 112bhp

ABOUT NOMAD CAMPERVANS

It all started with a rental company, Bunk Campers, with an initial fleet of five VWs. In 2012 the empire started to grow with the acquisition of Nomad Campervans. So, the now greatly extended hire fleet comprises VW Nomads (as well as others) – with operations spanning five outlets, each offering slightly different services, throughout the UK and Ireland.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

BUNK CAMPERS

TEL 02890 813057

WEB bunkcampers.com

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

Well used, but a good example of Nomad's most popular model, so there will be other opportunities – either with new conversions or ex-rental, like this.

Because of its rental roots, there's a roof bed in this model, bringing it up to four-berth status. In a 'normal' Nomad Camper, it would be an extra.

Of course, this example has had its knocks during its time as a rental vehicle. Holes in the roof canvas were in evidence (but such things will be sorted before selling). Equally, it's stood up well to that tougher life – and the highly competitive pricing means you could be in for quite a bargain. It's actually a rather good idea to see a camper that's spent time as a hire vehicle – as Nomad puts it, one year's hire is equivalent to five years in normal use.



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2013 Nomad Ranger

high-top, low price

£27,500



Basic roof bed, carpet trim looking a bit tatty



It's loooooong in here!

FOR

- Super-low price
- Long-wheelbase space advantage

AGAINST

- Ex-rental vehicles take hard knocks
- No upper-level windows or ventilation
- Basic upper bed boards

If you thought the price of the Camper over the page was a bit tasty, what about this? It's easy to explain why – see the ex-rental fleet comments in the preceding report.

This is the only long-wheelbase T5 in this Showdown, but it's a ready reminder that: a) you can have significantly more interior space (or so it seems) with a LWB version; and b) it otherwise performs exactly like the SWB T5 and you're unlikely to notice any difference in fuel economy. In fact, the longer T5 offers slightly better ride and handling as a result of the greater distance between the wheels.

It's another high-top, too, using a Reimo roof, although the join where roof meets body is rather crude in places to say the least, and is only highlighted by the otherwise perfect colour match.

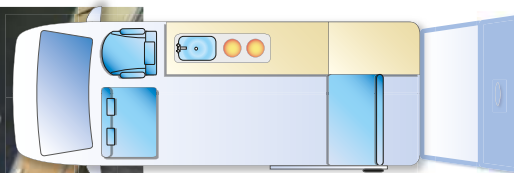
Inside the tailgate, there's a fresh water tank that's removable for filling and cleaning, along with gas locker access and leisure battery storage. The fire extinguisher and CO alarm here are welcome safety features, too – if your campervan isn't offered with at least the former, demand one to be fitted before you go camping.

It's the older Reimo Variotech Classic seat here (rather than the 333 fitted in the Nomad

Camper), offering safe travel for just two, with a rock 'n' roll mechanism that, once the headrests are removed, converts readily to a double bed. It's not just a narrower seat, the newer Reimo unit is much slicker in use.

Upstairs, it's not quite so sophisticated. It's a Reimo roof that's fully lined, but it lacks anything in the way of windows, ventilation, or anything, really, apart from a single LED ceiling light and some slightly padded loose boards that pull out to make another double bed. Plus, the retaining straps for these two boards had gone AWOL, although, again, that's something that will be





The long-wheelbase T5 offers usefully more worktop and cupboard space



Beds up and down are a decent size



See the slide-out water tank bottom right

sorted as part of the snagging process for Nomad's ex-rental campers that are about to be put up for sale.

It's the usual Smev hob and sink combination unit here, supported by a Vitrifrigo compressor fridge operating from 12V/230V – but total capacity is a restrictive 39 litres; that's not a lot if you're setting out to provide accommodation for a family of four.

There's just the one opening window in the living area – a slider behind the kitchen. It's the kitchen that benefits most from the use of a long-wheelbase T5, too. There's more work surface

(quite a lot more) and cupboard storage here.

Thereafter, much of the kit is echoed in the preceding Camper write-up – German-made furniture, the fresh water supply system is the same, as are the electrics, most of the interior lighting is LED, and the wiring, flooring and insulation are the same materials/suppliers. There's one key difference, though. The cab includes a double passenger seat on a swivel, and, again, we found it awkward to use and rather clonky in feel.

Do note, also, this is a rather different beast to the recently announced 2016 Ranger – an all-

new design using the T5/T6 Kombi (ie with VW's own rear double-seat) as its base, but with a walk-through floorplan that puts the kitchen on one side and storage on the other at the back, plus a choice of high-top or front-hinged elevating roof.

However, Nomad says it can still build you a Ranger 'Mark One', should you wish.

We can only sum up this Nomad Ranger as a bit of a wild card. The price is the big attraction, of course, but maybe you might also want to budget for a few upgrades/improvements to this particular example.

FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T30

PRICES FROM £27,500

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £13,500 (new layout)

PRICE AS TESTED £27,500

EXTRAS FITTED Propex heater (£800)

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 5.30m L, 1.90m W, 2.65m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 5

BED SIZES Lower 1.90m x 1.16m, upper 2.00m x 1.16m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 960kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT NOMAD CAMPERVANS

See also the previous report on the Nomad Camper. To add to that, the current Nomad portfolio comprises five models – Camper, Camper+, Evolution, Sport and Ranger; the last available as a high-top or with an elevating roof. In total, there are seven different interior layouts with a choice of finishes, and four exterior styling options. Hire before you buy? Why not? It could actually prevent a costly mistake.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

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WEB bunkcampers.com

Which motorhome says ★★★★★
Putting up an ex-hire vehicle is a brave move, but Nomad can feel almost fully vindicated – you start to forgive a lot at a price like this.

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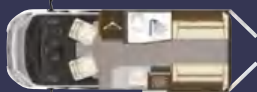


FITTED AS STANDARD

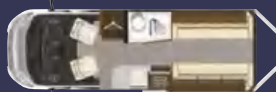
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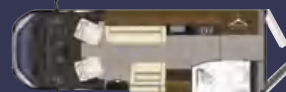
540 SE NEW FOR 2016



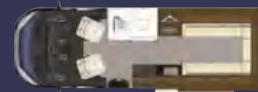
610 SE NEW FOR 2016



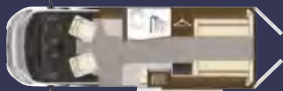
600 SPORT



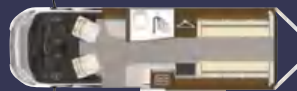
610 SPORT



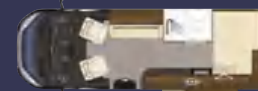
605 SE NEW FOR 2016



635 SE NEW FOR 2016



620 SPORT



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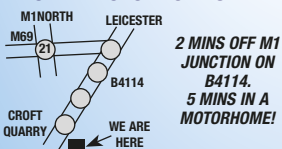
www.youtube.com/AutoTrailTV

MOTORLAND

LEISURE VEHICLES

- 15 BESCARR E494 HI STYLE FIAT 2.3 JTD, 4 berth, low profile on alko chassis, 1 owner, 300 miles, island bed, front lounge with seat belts and swivel seats, sep. shower, sat nav, air con, cruise control, rev camera, as new. spoil yourself£47,500
- 08 58 NU VENTURE SURF CITROEN BERLINGO 1.6HDI, 25,000 mls, 2 berth mini coachbuilt. 2 singles or double, cooker, sink, 3 way fridge, flushing cass. toilet. A little beauty & 50mpg to boot£22,000
- 06 COMPASS CASTAWAY PEUGEOT 2.8HDI, 4 berth low profile on Alko chassis, 25,000mls. Rear French bed with front inward facing lounge. Swivel capt. seats, shower, toilet, blown air, cond throughout, alloy wheels, awning rev. sensors. Beautifully kept.....£26,500
- 05 55 AVONDALE SEASCAPE 5 ELX. FIAT 2.3 JTD. 3 berth coachbuilt. Just 15,000 miles. Pass swivel, shower cass. toilet, rear L shaped lounge with 1 seat belts, blown air, fridge, oven, rev.camera. Rare opportunity£22,000
- 03 IH FULMAR Fiat 2.8JTD, 2 berth, LWB, hi top, 57,000 mls. Just two lady owners. Beautifully built interior. 2 swivel Capt. seats, long singles or large double bed, end kitchen, shower, cass. toilet, blown air, removable carpets. One of a handful made. Finished in gorgeous grey metallic£20,000
- 01Y AUTOHOMES WAYFARER PEUGEOT 1.9 turbo diesel, 41,000 miles, 2 owners, pass, swivel, pullman dinette with seat belts, long sofa opposite, shower, cass toilet, end kitchen, heater, awning, bike rack, classic family layout..... £16,000
- 01Y SWIFT SUNDANCE 520 MARQUIS LIFESTYLE FIAT 1.9TDI 55,000 mls. Small 4 berth coachbuilt. Swivel pass seat, pullman dinette with 2 seat belts, kitchen with oven, shower, cass toilet, heater, removeable carpets, bike rack, alarmed. Just 17'3" long for easy peasy parking.....£15,000
- 99 (PERSONAL REG. NO.) NIESMANN + BISCHOFF ARTO 59S FIAT 2.8JTD 56,000 mls, 5 berth A Class. Large drop down bed, pullman dinette with seat belts, long sofa opposite, large bathroom, fully winterised double floor, removable carpets, pass swivel, beautiful beechwood furniture, ample exterior storage, legendary build quality.....£19,500
- 96 (PERSONAL REG. NO.) AUTOSLEEPER TROOPER. VW 2.4 diesel 4 berth, solid sided, elevating roof, side kitchen, pass swivel, R & R bed with rear seat belts, blown air, colour coded white bumpers & mirrors, large alloy wheels, tinted glass, twin headlights, twin exhausts, most distinctive!.....£13,500
- 94M AUTOSLEEPER CLUBMAN GL VW 2.4 TURBO DIESEL 67,000 mls. FSH, 2 berth GRP monocoque compact coachbuilt under 17 long, 2 sofas, end kitchen, shower, blown air. Fiamma awning. A lovely example of the best selling motorhome ever from the Autosleeper stable£14,500
- 91 AUTOSLEEPER HARMONY TALBOT 2.0 petrol, 4 berth, hi top, pass swivel, shower comp, cass toilet, 3 way fridge, blown air heating, 2 rear lap belts, 2 singles or double, part exchange clearance£6,500

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2012 Rolling Homes Columbus

a great discovery

£34,750



Free-standing table stores on the sliding door...



... but takes up too much space when erected

FOR

- Top-quality woodwork
- Flexible approach

AGAINST

- Table takes up too much floor space
- Lower bed rather short

IT'S the cabinetwork that's the initial attraction here – with extensive use of real oak and some beautiful joinery work, from a company that has its background in designing kitchens for the home, as well as fitting out boat interiors.

Columbus is Rolling Homes' traditional-format VW, using the time-honoured furniture along one side and an RIB rear seat for a double bed. The company's rear kitchen Livingstone won a previous Ultimate Showdown of VWs in December 2013. Upholstery is Volkswagen's own black Tassimo, while the cab seats have Sportscraft swivels, and the shape of the furniture

units allows the driver's seat to turn.

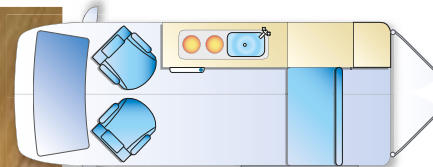
There's also SCA's Deluxe elevating roof with its double bed on slats, making it a more comfortable proposition than some. This roof also provides more foot room in the roof bed as it lifts higher at the rear.

The real wood theme continues on the surrounds to the kitchen and rear nearside windows, which, again, helps lift the interior (although there were a couple of disappointing details in this example, which didn't fit with what we expect of a Rolling Homes conversion). However, the Corian worktop is in keeping with

this more premium offering, while under the skin, Rolling Homes uses sheep's wool insulation.

It was the table that caused most discussion in this camper. It's a Volkswagen stock item (from the California), although Rolling Homes has adapted the fitting to clip it away in the sliding door – a really neat location that makes it far easier to access than the table storage fittings chosen by most other converters. However, in use, it just takes up too much floor space – and makes accessing the kitchen's drawer, cupboard and fridge too tricky (you find you're always having to shift the table). It can also be used outdoors, of





FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T30

PRICES FROM £40,995 (all new)

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £13,995 (plus roof)

PRICE AS TESTED £34,750

EXTRAS FITTED Wind out awning (£665), inverter (£270), solar panel (£495)

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.98m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES Lower 1.78m x 1.12m, upper 2.00m x 1.30m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 750kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT ROLLING HOMES

It was a 35-year background in designing and making kitchens that led Mark Cooper to set up Rolling Homes. His Shrewsbury-based company, which moved to larger premises this year, continues to uphold his belief in quality woodwork – although the solid oak can actually be lighter than typical campervan furniture. Hardly surprisingly, the 'normal VW layout' Columbus makes up some three-quarters of Rolling Homes' sales, but other models include the Shackleton and Livingstone. Thereafter, each model can be fitted out to customers' own specifications. It has a ready supply of T5s, but can also convert customer-supplied vans.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

ROLLING HOMES

TEL 01743 443877

WEB rolling-homes.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

We're usually big fans of the quality of Rolling Homes' work... but felt a few practical details – especially that table – let down this particular example.

Lovely real oak furniture but with a few details here not up to Rolling Homes' usual high standards



Bed is rather short, but the roof bed is bigger



Corner shelf is useful at night-time

course (but you supply your own chairs, unlike in a California). Rolling Homes is quick to point out, too, that it can offer alternative table solutions as part of its bespoke service.

Overall storage can also be adapted to suit individual needs. Again, with this example, the feeling was that more could have been made of the wardrobe area. (Just ask – there are alternatives, including a more practical storage box.)

Again, it's details where it pays to do your research before ordering a more bespoke offering. If you think those push buttons for the locker doors are too small, for example (they are

very fiddly), Rolling Homes does offer a second, larger size.

The company makes play of its preference for a fixed RIB seat at the back, pointing out that the height means more base storage space. There's still some through-view for the driver and you can still open the fridge with the bed down.

In the against column, though, are the facts that the bed is short and some folk find the handles for folding the seating out into a bed aren't the easiest to operate. It's more about getting used to the process.

There are no other surprises in the kitchen –

where the Smev combination unit puts the hob towards the driver's seat (although there's a bit of worktop gap), with a drawer and Waeco compressor fridge immediately below.

The T5 here is the T30 variant (for greater payload), with 2-litre 101bhp (102PS) engine, which means it only qualifies for the five-speed manual gearbox. A higher-than-average mileage on the base vehicle also helps keep the price down in this instance.

Still not convinced? Ask about Rolling Homes' hire service and/or pay a visit to its swish new extended premises on the outskirts of Shrewsbury.



Rolling Homes

Shrewsbury, Shropshire

Tel: 03331 230085

Email: info@rolling-homes.co.uk

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"Very impressed with the quality of Rolling Homes work. Fantastic attention to details, top class workmanship. After looking around other conversions none offered as good a finish as Rolling Homes. Couldn't fault them and would highly recommend Rolling Homes to anyone."

- B.L



2015 Stowford Cam



FOR

- Generous specification
- Unique handover



AGAINST

- Budget elevating roof
- Storage needs a bit more thought



Table is more sturdy than most...



... but it stores on the back door



NOT only is this the most recent base vehicle here (a 15-plate), it's also in highly desirable Highline trim, with metallic blue paintwork and Wolfrace alloy wheels also helping this vehicle stand out from the crowd. (As with any camper sitting on after-market rims, check they are the correct weight rating for the 'van and sample the ride quality before buying on anything larger than 17in diameter wheels.)

There's also the added bonus of shiny side bars – with such items, especially if they're non-VW accessories, it's always worth checking that you can still access the jacking points.

Stowford mixes the generally renowned superior manufacturing qualities of RIB's rear seat bed with a roof from UK maker, Austop. The latter definitely seemed among the flimsier such offerings here, but it does come with its own five-year warranty. (Stowford backs all its conversion work with a 12-month warranty.) It only just convinces as a bed, too – it's slightly tricky to pull down and, in this case, without any form of mattress. (You'll have to ask Stowford about that – it can supply one.) All in all, we'd prefer to see a German roof, from Reimo or SCA.

There are plenty of tweaks inside, too, to add

to the individuality. That Union Jack finish to the fridge door is the most obvious example, should you wish. Stowing the table and its leg (a Sequoia fitting that screws into the floor) on the rear barn door might look rather neat initially. But such an arrangement will definitely not be appreciated so much when you have to get out in adverse weather to retrieve or stow it.

This vehicle offers the flexibility of travel seating for up to five, thanks to a double cab passenger seat swivel from Kiravans that, with a bit of coaxing (a lot? Ed), can be twisted round when you're on site. Once again, it's not our

per Vans — a site-setter



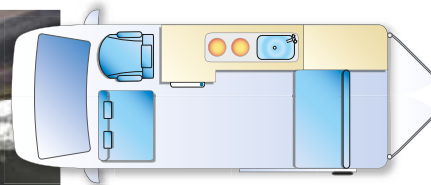
We're not fans of the double swivel seat



Fridge goes all patriotic, but we're not sure why!



Bed sizes are ok but roof mattress costs extra



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28

PRICES FROM £29,999

CONVERSION ONLY FROM N/a

PRICE AS TESTED £36,995

EXTRAS FITTED Alloy wheels (£699), side bars (£199)

TYPE APPROVAL None

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.96m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 5

BED SIZES Lower 1.83m x 1.13m, upper 1.85m x 1.12m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,800kg

PAYLOAD TBC

ENGINE 2-litre, 101bhp

ABOUT STOWFORD CAMPERVANS

One of the most successful touring sites in the UK turned its hand to caravan and motorhome retailing around a decade ago... and its own campervans are a logical enough extension of that. Gradually bringing all production in-house, as well as a full handover that includes the opportunity to use your new purchase on Stowford's own, highly regarded campsite, add to the attractions here.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

STOWFORD CAMPERVANS

TEL 01271 889339

WEB stowfordcampervans.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

It's early days for Stowford as a campervan producer, but it's learning fast, has some ambitious plans and its offering even extends to a stay on site.

favourite feature and we'd point you towards a camper with something like Reimo's three-person 333 rear seat in the back instead if you need five belted pews in your campervan.

The furniture unit along the offside holds few surprises, although the drawer above the fridge will always come in handy and the Corian-style worktop also extends to a deep lip along the back and around the side.

The USB sockets adjacent to the rear seat will definitely be appreciated.

A single hatch in the seat base is large enough to allow for a Porta Potti, but makes access to the

rest of the space unnecessarily awkward. The heavy-duty gas locker, just inside the back door, even comes with a key-operated lock. There's also handy two-way access to the locker above this.

More could be made of the storage elsewhere, however, especially the kitchen's largest cupboard, which includes a rather strange single shelf to accommodate the fresh water container. The shelf itself won't retain much when travelling.

The base area of the wardrobe, too, would benefit from a lower shelf, which would help hide the gas pipe and electrical wiring work. As standard, you do get a hanging rail as well as one

removable shelf. It is good, however, to see flooring that's sealed to the base of the furniture, as here.

There's definitely more to come from Stowford Campervans, especially now that it's set up for producing its conversions from its own, adapted workshop at its Stowford Farm Meadows base (where there's already a full NCC-approved workshop, and more).

And, again, we stress, the facility to see a line-up of campers of differing specifications and price points should be a key part of your buying process.

Now, all it needs is a model name!



2013 Vanworx Slip



£35,000



FOR

- Overall commitment and qualities



AGAINST

- Heater only an option
- Some storage questions



Again, RIB seat allows a good boot



Toilet stores under seat (the best place)



HOPEFULLY by now you're starting to get a picture. More ambitious converters have European Whole Vehicle Type Approval at least on the horizon. Well, here's a company that's already there, despite a policy that means all its campers are built to order.

Vanworx carries out all its work at its manufacturing premises in Portland, Dorset, and retailing from its address in Shoreham, Sussex. Vanworx campers are also retailed by the VW Kamper Centre at Ringwood, Hampshire.

If you're happy to supply your own T5, the short-wheelbase Slipper conversion costs from

around £13,750, with extras as listed opposite among the more popular. Vanworx also has a steady supply of base vehicles, mainly its preferred Highlines, from which you can choose.

There are no surprises with the floorplan, which uses a RIB rear seat and Reimo elevating roof – a combination favoured by plenty of other converters. Explaining this, Vanworx says, "When we went for our full European Type Approval status, the VCA (Vehicle Certification Agency) scrutinised all existing test reports for the beds on the market and there wasn't one that would get us through full European Type

Approval. RIB had the safest solution. However, their fitting frame was pretty ghastly and left the floor approx 40mm higher at the back. We designed our own fitting frame, fitted this to a T5 chassis and it was all tested at Manchester University (Status) and witnessed by the VCA."

There's also a cab seat swivel here, from Bebb (although the company's Whole European Type Approval is for conversions using VW's own swivels). Insulation is a product called Thermafleece, from Wales.

Thereafter, much here is tried and trusted – Vöhringer furniture, Smev hob/sink, Varta

per – taking the Highline



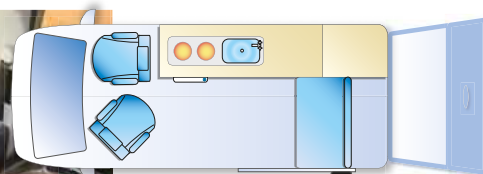
Highline cab and six-speed gearbox add appeal



Open shelf above galley could spew out contents en route



Tall unit needs better access to its storage



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 T30 Highline

PRICES FROM £35,000 (new T6)

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £9,750 (2-berth)/£13,750 (4-berth)

PRICE AS TESTED Around £35,000

EXTRAS FITTED VW side windows (£900), Eberspächer heater (£1,200), drawer over fridge (£210), Bebb cab seat swivel (£300)

TYPE APPROVAL European Whole Vehicle

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.05m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 4

BED SIZES Lower 1.86m x 1.12m, upper 2.00m x 1.65m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 780kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 138bhp

ABOUT VANWORX

This converter has been on the scene since 2007, emerging as one of the leading suppliers of campers based on pre-owned T5s. Latest conversions all have European Whole Vehicle Type Approval and there's a strong commitment towards safety. But there's innovation, too, like the optional iPad installs and integral Bose Bluetooth speakers. Typical pre-owned T5 builds come out at around £40,000.

MOTORHOME SUPPLIED BY

VANWORX LEISURE VEHICLE SPECIALISTS

TEL 01305 824428 or 01273 454613

WEB vanworx.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

Sold to a customer a year ago, but there's plenty here to give you a picture of where Vanworx is heading.

110Ah leisure battery, a table that attaches to a rail on the kitchen unit for adjustment (still probably the best formula).

And the purple flooring? It's as the customer wanted and other colours are available – thankfully! Vanworx uses Altro flooring, generally recognised as among the most durable and better quality of such products. It's always worth checking out the flooring of any camper, including the way it's finished around the edges.

If we were to quibble, it would be over the tiniest of apertures for the locker over the rear seat, making access to this useful area so much

more difficult than it need be. Also, it's a rather curious, central location for the gas locker inside the tailgate, which means it blocks off other storage. In both cases, we've seen much more practical solutions.

The two-way access to the wardrobe is definitely welcome, with a full-height door to the rear that you can access when the tailgate is open, plus a second, smaller (but much too small) hatch for access when you are in the 'van and the bed is down.

As ever, plenty comes down to the practical details and what will suit your needs.

Having said that, all Vanworx conversions are built to order on the usual layouts, so there is some room to manoeuvre with individual requests. Most builds use the Highline T5, as here, although this example also has the 138bhp (140PS) engine upgrade. If you can find a T5 with this power unit, it's certainly worth paying a bit more, especially as the sixth gear enhances refinement at motorway cruising speeds. This (and cab spec) will make resale much easier, too.

The final plus is that every Vanworx conversion to a pre-owned VW carries a full, two-year warranty. That's very reassuring.





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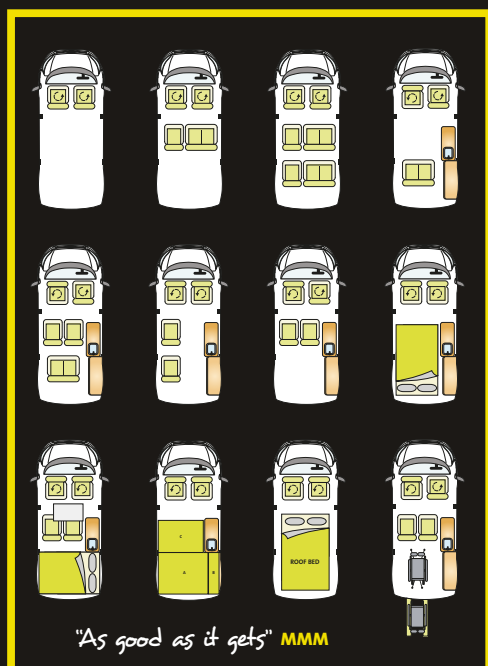
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Table slides with the rear Reimo seat

FOR

- Upmarket and stylish
- Sliding seat versatility
- Very high specification

AGAINST

- Pricey, and it still needs a few options adding

HERE'S a different approach again, as Volksleisure is up there at the premium level. That's deliberate, we should add, because this converter espouses the use of the 138bhp (140PS) engine as a start point for any of its conversions – arguing it has superior performance, economy and refinement, as well as an extra gear, over lower-powered versions. It's hard to disagree, and yet the 101bhp five-speeder can be deemed as adequate (and ok, if you really insist, the company isn't going to turn down your custom).

With that proviso, you're looking at pre-owned base vehicles that can start from £15,000, but are

more likely to end up edging ever nearer the £25,000 price point. Add in a conversion that, here at least, equates to some £22,000 and you can see it's serious money for a complete package – but you could, just about, get close to our £35,000 target in the right circumstances.

There's little compromise when it comes to fittings like Reimo's flagship Easyfit elevating roof and a Variotech rear seat for three people. The latter slots into floor rails for sliding – which means you can push the whole unit forward for absolute optimum load-carrying space.

Worth noting, also, is that Volksleisure says all

future conversions will use the multi-positional locking Reimo 3000 seat. This has six different travel seating positions, while you could also go for additional seats if you want to take the people-carrying capacity up to seven (and still retain all the camping facilities). Alternatively, and admittedly with a bit of effort, the whole bench seat can be removed altogether, should you have an occasional need for larger loads.

One other big difference between Reimo's rear seating and closest rival, RIB, is the former is set lower, so there's less chance of legs dangling (not such a good idea, especially over long journeys).





It's a good-sized double bed in the Volksleisure and LED lights switch from white to blue



Sliding Reimo seat means BIG loads can be carried



Smart high-gloss furniture gives the Silver Star a plush feel

In turn, there's more storage space in the base of the RIB seat.

There are a few other touches in the Silver Star that are worthy of note. The lockers over the kitchen have open tops – the idea being that, when the roof is down for travel, it seals them; with the roof up, you get easier access. It's a really clever idea.

All furniture has a smart, high-gloss finish that's currently very fashionable (and is even used on the cab seat bases), with finger catches for doors. The tambour-doored wardrobe in this example has both a hanging rail and shelving –

but that's probably an indication that you can opt for one or the other (a facility offered by most of the converters represented here).

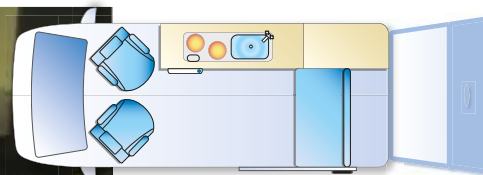
Other fittings include a gas barbecue point and external shower, both just inside the tailgate, a storage box in the rear seat base, and a floor locker below the grill that's large enough to stow a portable toilet. Also part of the standard specification are a 6kg propane gas cylinder (most campervans use smaller Campingaz butane cylinders), 25m mains hook-up lead, thermal screens for the cab windows, rear speakers, plenty of LED lighting (in blue as well as white), a solar

panel and plenty more. Those huge alloys might mean a rather lumpy ride quality, though.

Nevertheless, as you can see from the data panel above, there are also a few options added that you might consider essential.

Future models will also see the grill relegated to the options list, thus freeing up valuable kitchen storage space.

The Silver Star rather broke through our price barrier, but it's a pretty impressive piece of kit, topped off by a three-year warranty on the conversion. Only thing is, a brand-new T6 California Ocean from VW starts at £47,840...



FACT FILE

BASED ON Volkswagen Transporter T5 Highline T30

PRICES FROM £42,000

CONVERSION ONLY FROM £22,500

PRICE AS TESTED £45,000

EXTRAS FITTED Roof bed (£490), roof ladder (£75), roof net (£75), awning (£650), Webasto heater (£980), windscreen blinds (£420), 20in alloy wheels (£1,350), Sportline style front and rear spoiler (£900)

TYPE APPROVAL Individual

DIMENSIONS 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 2.02m H

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS 5

BED SIZES Lower 1.95m x 1.31m, upper 1.90m x 1.10m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,000kg

PAYLOAD 640kg

ENGINE 2-litre, 138bhp

ABOUT VOLKSLEISURE

An offshoot of the Wellhouse Leisure set-up, as you've probably guessed, Volksleisure restricts itself to VW conversions. But that hasn't stopped it branching out to becoming an agent for Freedom, the all-GRP mini caravans from Poland that are actually quite an interesting complement to a campervan.

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Which motorhome says ★★★★★

A stylish conversion from a company that's not afraid to aim for the premium end of the market. We certainly like the way everything is executed here, but it's rather hard to justify the cost in this company.

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The big decision...



DOWN TO A T...

So much choice. So many differences – some minor, but all significant – between the converters (as well as their conversions), not least in their methods of retailing. In truth, there are dozens of ‘VW camper specialists’ out there – all slightly different, all claiming high-quality work at the best prices. We’ve done you a big favour, narrowing it down to just 13.

Even then, our judges ended up feeling we were trying to cover off too many sub-sectors here. For example, the typical VW camper will have an elevating roof, furniture along the side and a rear seat that converts into a double bed. As you’ve just read, alternatives are available.

Interpretations of “crash-tested” abound for the latter – and we’d expect every converter to be able to point to certificates showing such a

fitting has been subject to a strain test, at least (and ideally, carried out within a bodysell rather than just on a bench), as well as an explanation for the way they then go about fitting such items. We also have here examples of alternative roofs, including high-tops.

At heart is that critical question: what do you want to use your camper for? Daily driver or weekends only? How many do you want to travel and sleep in it? What else do you want it to carry? Bikes? Awning? Outdoor gear? Are permanent fresh and waste water tanks necessary, or can you get by with a portable water carrier and a bucket? What kind of heating? How essential is a solar panel? What’s the storage like? That is a massive area to cover off and, again, one where only you – the paying customer – can really have the final say.

Then there are tables, cooking arrangements,

insulation... it’s an almost endless list.

And we haven’t even got as far as budget yet, let alone individual styling preferences. Also, buying local could well be another big factor to consider.

What this exercise does prove is that you have to choose so carefully when it comes to picking a VW camper like this. There are arguments both ways in terms of either making sure you get the best possible T5 base, or go all-out for a cracking conversion while remaining within budget.

What’s different here – and frankly, makes judging almost impossible – is that most converters are more than happy to customise their designs to suit the individual. It’s worth noting, however, that those that don’t have learnt the hard way about what sells and what doesn’t. Put bluntly, the more bespoke you make your vehicle, the less chance you have of a decent price for it when you come to sell it

OUR THANKS

Special thanks to our hosts for this Ultimate Showdown – the **Holmsley Camping in the Forest Site**, Forest Road, Christchurch, Hampshire BH23 7EQ (campingintheforest.co.uk). With over 600 pitches available here across some 48 acres of what was originally a WW2 airfield, it was the perfect venue to pitch up with a baker's dozen of VW campers!



on. Definitely buyer beware. Then again, if you're happy to offset the enjoyment you'll get from having a product built especially for you, and the subsequent use of it, why would you want to measure it in hard cash terms?

DAVE SAYS...

Speaking as a former owner of a Volkswagen California (my best investment ever as far as motorhome ownership is concerned), as well as a 'bay window' (Holdsworth) and 'splitty' (Devon), I do caution against getting too carried away down the bespoke route.

Proven brands like Auto-Sleepers, Bilbo's and Hillside, therefore, have the strongest appeal. I could actually live with some of the downsides of the Trooper because its wider furniture unit means more storage space and it's got the most

comfortable sleeping arrangement here (for one). Critically, too, I know I'd get a great price on it after, say, some three or four years. If money wasn't an issue, the Volksleisure took my fancy – for the flexibility of its rear seating as well as the overall quality of the conversion work – but then you're dangerously close to the cost of a new T6 California (from £47,840).

NICK SAYS...

Yes, it's all too easy to end up paying too much and not getting a good return on your investment. So the conversion needs to have some provenance. If the Bilbo's here was a rising roof version, I'd have been sorely tempted. I do, however, rather like what Autohaus is doing – but I'm not a fan of leather upholstery and the dark interior of the model here certainly does not appeal.

AND THE EDITOR CALLS A WINNER...

Sometimes it's too easy to get carried away with the glamour and glitz. There's a camper out there for everyone but what our test has highlighted above all is provenance – ensuring you get a proven, practical camper counts way above bling. Of these 13, then, the Bilbo's Nexa comes close but its rear kitchen layout makes its appeal more 'niche' than its sister model, Celex, which is still a *Which Motorhome* favourite.

So Hillside's Birchover is the winner, and by a surprising margin. It's well-engineered from a company that's well known and respected – so it will hold its value better than most. There are no (nasty) surprises in the layout and it didn't just meet our £35,000 price target, it came in well under – allowing a bit of extra spend on extras, if you want fancier wheels, a better stereo or any other toys.

Swift

Escape 622

Britain's biggest maker of motorhomes adds a brand new, but entirely conventional, model to its value-for-money range

AT A GLANCE • PRICE FROM £37,700 • BERTHS 2 • TRAVEL SEATS 2

SWIFT'S Escape is the epitome of a classic British entry-level coachbuilt range. Escape prices start at less than £39k (including the essential Comfort Pack), topping out at a 100 quid or so under 42 grand. Five models offer accommodation for families or touring couples, with 2015 designs offering front and rear lounges, French bed and bunks layouts.

Styling is the norm for this type of motorhome – simple, quite obviously entry-level, but reasonably modern. Interiors belie the budget-priced moniker, however, with a classy look and upholstery that puts some other, more expensive brands to shame.

Swift's SMART, woodless construction system is enhanced for 2016 with, among other things, a new GRP-clad floor and fewer panels in the – also new – hail-resistant GRP roof. The rest of the improvements are merely tweaks: cup/phone holders (with AUX and USB sockets) in the cab, a new water-saving showerhead in the bathroom and digital LCD control panel for the heating.

There's just one new model for next season and it's very much a no-brainer: an entirely conventional,

reasonably compact, rear lounge low-profile. The type of motorhome you might expect to be in the line-up already as its layout has been a mainstay of UK-built 'vans since Noah looked at a rather dodgy weather forecast and started measuring up cubits.

No matter, let's take a look.

With this layout, where the bathroom and kitchen are ahead of the lounge, the cab plays no part in providing practical living space. It does, though, offer a completely separate seating area where you might sit and gaze out of the windscreen – hopefully, at a fantastic view or amazing sunset. In more practical fashion it does make a great informal storage area when pitched up: the bed for instance, when made up, sheds a few of its cushions and the best place to get them out of your way is in the cab.

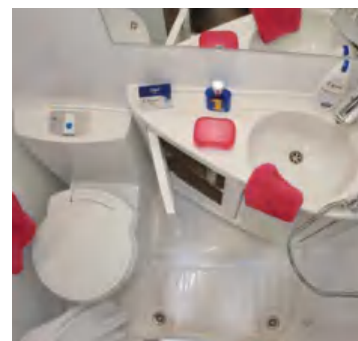
The latest version of Fiat's ever-popular base vehicle supports and drives the Escape and the 622 sits on the standard-height chassis-cab. That is cheaper, no doubt, but crucially, it's taller than more desirable options (Fiat's own Camper chassis or the Al-Ko rear frame), thus setting the living quarters higher off the ground.

Words & pictures
Dave Hurrell





Seat goes back far enough for the driver



Bathroom is functional, but rather dated



The kitchen: up-to-date and well equipped



Fuss-free meals at free-standing table

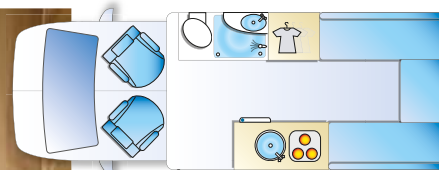
FOR

- Classic layout works well
- Keen price with good spec
- Interior belies entry-level pricing
- Comfy lounge
- Choice of beds

AGAINST

- Taller standard chassis
- Dated washroom
- No blind to kitchen rooflight
- One single bed rather short





No surprises in this traditional two-berth – except, perhaps, the sub-£38k price tag

The result (as well as less precise handling) is that an external step is needed, while the Comfort Pack gives it electric operation and auto retract on start up. Power is from the Ducato's stalwart 130bhp motor with six-speed manual 'box, which makes for excellent performance, especially in a compact, lightweight 'van, such as this.

With this layout it's important to check that – with the bathroom wall directly aft – you can get the driver's seat far enough back to achieve a decent driving position. Here, and even with the dining table also living directly behind, I found plenty of room.

As much as the above situation is an ordinary discovery, so the bathroom is a very ordinary facility. All is conventional in a long-lived design that's had plenty of time to become capable and functional with few faults. And that's pretty much what's found: integral shower, Thetford swivel-bowl loo, good storage space up and down. The only significant news in this bathroom is the Ecocamel Orbit water-saver showerhead. And water saving is a good idea as the fresh tank holds just 65 litres. Commendably, it's mounted inboard, but showering fans might wish it was a bit (or a lot) bigger.

There's not so much wrong with the function of the ablutions, but it's a rather old-fashioned look that really could do with modernising. Across the aisle, the kitchen shows the bathroom how it should be done. Nothing old-

hat in here, as cooker, fridge and even Swift's own GRP sink, are very much up-to-date. There's worktop (more with the flip-up at the forward end) good amounts of flexible storage – even a swish, stainless-steel microwave that's a standard-fit item.

Anyone interested in purchasing a 622 should enter, immediately turn right and settle themselves in the lounge, for this is the element that's very much the reason to buy. And there's very little to criticise in here. Four reading lamps and a ceiling fitting illuminate in fine fashion, while you can expect to seat maybe nine friends for an evening of drinks, nibbles and shooting the breeze. Alternatively, the two of you can get near-perfect feet-up lounging to read or watch TV – the telly's home served by the required sockets located on the aft end of the wardrobe's wall.

Dining is easy with the aforementioned – free-standing – table set up between the sofas.

There's one infill needed to make the big double bed. Two singles are also possible (very much his and hers as the nearside bed is just 5ft 9in long), with backrests stashed in the cab at lights out.

One annoyance is the rooflight above the kitchen, which has no blind; light sleepers beware.

Under the lounge seating is the lion's share of the stowage for bulky items and there's adequate space – a small external hatch is included on the nearside.

FACT FILE

PRICE FROM £37,700

PRICE AS TESTED £38,995

EXTRAS FITTED Comfort Pack – cab air-con, passenger airbag, electric entrance step, flyscreen door, windscreen blind, TV aerial, waste water tank heater and pipe insulation, fridge vent covers (£1,295)

TYPE APPROVAL European Whole Vehicle

BERTHS 2

TRAVEL SEATS (INC DRIVER) 2

DIMENSIONS 6.30m L, 2.31m W, 2.85m H

INTERIOR HEIGHT 1.97m

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,300kg

PAYLOAD 534kg

BEDS Lounge double 2.09m x 1.88m (max), alternative offside single 1.88m x 0.69m, alternative nearside single 1.75m x 0.69m

FRESH WATER 65 litres (inboard)

WASTE WATER 68 litres (underslung)

GAS 2 x 7kg

LEISURE BATTERY 80Ah

MAINS SOCKETS 3

BASE VEHICLE

FIAT DUCATO CHASSIS-CAB

ENGINE 2.3-litre, 130bhp, Euro V+, six-speed manual, front-wheel drive

COOKING/HEATING

COOKING Thetford slot-in half-height stove with three gas burners, grill/oven, stainless-steel microwave

FRIDGE Dometic 85-litre 3-way with manual energy selection and removable freezer compartment

HEATING Truma Combi 4kW, blown-air, gas/mains

BOILER Truma Combi, gas/mains

RIVALS

Bailey Approach Autograph 625

Elddis Accordo 120

Tribute 625

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Which motorhome says ★★★★★

The 622 is a welcome addition to the Escape range, having plenty of appeal for couples seeking a very British motorhome. Take a long look, but check out its rivals, too.

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- Metallic paint
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Standard conversion spec

- Side conversion with tambour doors
- SCA elevating roof, optional roof bed
- Seats x 5 people with crash tested sliding rear seat system which makes large bed
- Swivel seats, heated with armrests
- Leisure battery & 95w solar panel
- Mains hook up
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Speaking Spanglish

We all talk a bit of Franglais, but the latest import from Marquis seems to mix Iberian vibes with the best of British, so should we all learn some Spanglish?

AT A GLANCE • PRICE FROM £51,995 • BERTHS 4 • TRAVEL SEATS 4



WITH the euro exchange rate making imported vehicles more competitive and a booming UK market, all the major continental manufacturers want a slice of the action. Our action. And almost all of them are making noises about 'tailoring' their vans to our – your! – wants and needs. That means anything from adding ovens and carpets to developing specific layouts. But few go as far as Benimar.

The Spanish outpost of the Trigano empire has only been back on our soil for a little over a year, but with the might of the Marquis dealer network behind it as sole retailers, the brand has made its mark. Sales have far outstripped early expectations, giving its importer the confidence to expand the

range. In addition to the new single bed 264 seen here, the fashionable 286 (with large front lounge, end washroom and garage – see *MMM*, November 2015) swells the line-up to seven floorplans for 2016.

The whole range also gets increased specification this season, too, reflecting Marquis' buying power and that advantageous exchange rate. So, power now comes from the 148bhp engine as standard and the Fiat cab also gets a top-spec DAB radio with touchscreen and integrated reversing monitor and sat-nav. Drop-down beds that were previously optional become standard and all models now boast the Grade III insulation, while detail additions include 12V/230V sockets in external lockers, a habitation door with window

and pocket, an external barbecue point, a 140W solar panel and a spare wheel. More importantly, the Winter Pack is now included, too, thus adding the 6kW Combi heater, an insulated and heated waste tank, insulated external pipes and a thermal windscreen cover (in addition to the Remis blinds). With such an impressive list of kit – without recourse to pages of options listings – the new 264 looks stunning value at £51,995.

CONTINENTAL CONFUSION

On the outside, the most important feature is so obvious that you might not even notice it – the habitation door is on the UK side. That certainly confused the receptionist at Pinewoods Holiday


 CLICK
HERE FOR
VIDEO


Words & pictures
Peter Vaughan



Fold-in-half table is practical when only two are dining but gloss white top shows fingerprints

Park, Wells-next-the-Sea, when she asked me whether my 'van was British or continental (before instructing me which way round to park on the pitch)...

The Mileo is also a handsome enough design with plenty of practical touches, from the low entrance (requiring no external step) to the super-sized overcab sunroof, but the missus and I disagreed on the yellow graphics – I liked them as a welcome change from blander hues, she had rather disparaging comments instead.

But no-one could surely fail to spot the new Dometic Deluxe windows with their flush fit and black frames – so much smarter than the caravan-type glazing sitting proud of the

bodywork that you might expect on a mid-range motorhome like this.

And the beauty goes more than skin deep with Styrofoam insulation, 95% wood-free construction and a fully GRP exterior. Despite this not being a garage model, there are also large external locker doors on either side, opening onto generous storage space.

20 EXTRA HORSES

The 264 is a substantial chunk of leisure transport at 7.39m overall, so the fitment of the 150 Multijet engine as standard is a real plus. We've long reckoned that this is the sweet spot in the Ducato range, without the weight and cost of the 3-litre

but with 20Nm more torque than the ubiquitous 130 motor. You can feel the extra oomph when passing the slow-moving agricultural vehicles that are a regular obstruction on the roads of Norfolk. Early indications suggest that the more potent unit should be a little more frugal, too – 27.8mpg was quite impressive on the Benimar's first outing, but we've got the next six months to see if this is an accurate picture as the 264 joins us on long-term test to replace our much-missed Hymer ML-I (see page 78).

There's no doubt already that the 264 drives well, handling with the surefooted nature of a well-balanced motorhome on the lowered Camper chassis. It's not without its flaws, though. Rattles are





Mix of light and dark furniture works well but we're not sure about the pricey faux leather option

QUALITY COUNTS ★★★★★

The Mileo impresses from the off with its GRP bodywork and Styrofoam insulation. Inside, too, all looks smart and modern and there are high-quality fittings like the framed windows, soft-closing kitchen drawers and superior blinds. Not so impressive are the optional faux leather upholstery, ill-fitting removable carpets and the number of rattles.

The Mileo also blotted its copybook on its first outing with an electrical fault that tripped out the site's mains hook-up. We had to switch to gas for the fridge and Combi boiler but Marquis had us booked in to our nearest branch within hours of our return home, and collected the 'van for rectification. The Mileo was back with us after a couple of days. The diagnosis? A wiring loom issue.

too numerous for our liking (the cooker and the apothecary unit may be the culprits) and there's a significant blindspot caused by the odd omission of a window forward of the door on the nearside.

Reversing is a doddle, though, thanks to the superb in-dash display on the radio/sat-nav screen, which is equally impressive in bright light and after dark. The TomTom navigation is easy to use, too, and techy types will appreciate the two USB sockets in the dash, plus a third above the passenger's seat (with overcab shelf adjacent). Bringing motorhome cab spec kicking and screaming into the second decade of the 2000s, this Fiat even has automatic headlights!

HALF PROVEN

The 264 is the first fixed single bed layout in the Mileo range and it gets all the 2016 model year enhancements of its sister models, but much of the actual layout – everything from the kitchen forward, in fact – is inherited from the island bed 294 model (see *MMM*, March 2015). Aft of the galley, a stylish Japanese-style sliding door creates a two-room effect with proper privacy for the end bedroom and its en suite facilities. Slide back that door

and you may be surprised to find low-level single beds rather than the more usual steps up to mattresses mounted over a garage. It's certainly a more unusual configuration, although some brands (such as Rapido and Pilote) offer the choice of either.

Here, the more domestic-style bedroom creates a spacious feel to the interior, which genuinely seems more roomy than most fixed bed rivals of a similar size. Perhaps that's also down to the new Noisette furniture (a stylish combination of very dark and almost white woodwork) and the clean, glossy white walls. There's a bright, modern vibe to the interior of this Spaniard.

NO COWS HARMED

Up front, things aren't quite so airy. There's that blank wall where we'd like a window and, of course, the drop-down bed precludes daylight from overhead. Nevertheless, the huge overcab Skyview rooflight comes to the rescue and there's no shortage of LED illumination (though the only directionally adjustable lamps are in the rear bedroom). We especially liked the Chausson-style reading lights that are set into shelves at the sides of the overcab.



Unusually, drawers extend from the end of the L-shaped galley



Stylish sliding door shuts off en suite bedroom



Touchscreen radio includes sat-nav and reversing monitor



Apothecary unit is great for tins, bottles, etc

This isn't a large lounge, by any means, but it does offer two extra travel seats and the fold-in-half table slides and twists to ensure that it's never a nuisance. Indeed, with only two of us onboard, we never needed to unfold it. Doubled in size, it felt a bit wobbly, so care might be needed to avoid spillages. In any case, you'll have to stock up on cleaning materials to keep that high-gloss white tabletop looking factory-fresh.

You'll also notice that the cab chairs are higher than the rear seats, a factor reflected in a difference in floor heights, too. But the L-shape to the main settee is no mere token effort and the single side seat opposite is a decent size, so four could unwind or dine here easily. They couldn't all comfortably view the telly, though, using the factory mounting adjacent to the habitation door. Those in the cab chairs have prime viewing of *Strictly*, with the rear seats ideal as footrests – getting your legs up under the table is strictly for those of ballerina proportions, though.

You might worry less about laying your size nines on the Zurich trim here, as it should wipe clean easily, but its fit and feel are more lookalike than leather. As a no-cost option we'd consider it, but not at £745 extra.

CARPETS TO KITCHEN

The press-studded carpets are another feature that fails to impress, with their approximate fit around the furniture – including a right-angle by the curved bathroom wall!

So, it's reassuring to enter the cook's quarters and find not only a decent working area but one that has genuinely been enhanced by Marquis' insistence on a proper UK specification. Here, that's most clearly demonstrated by the mains hotplate on the hob and by the microwave above the fridge/freezer – at eye-level rather than sky-level.

Benimar and Marquis have resisted the temptation of going the whole hog with a full cooker, though, and sensibly opted for a Thetford Triplex with combined oven/grill. It takes up less space and is, surely, all you'll ever need on holiday.

The three kitchen drawers, unusually, come out into the widest part of the 'van, rather than towards the rear, so they are easy to access, and the full-height apothecary unit is perfect for bottles, tins, etc. You may need a session on the rack, though, before you can see into the cupboard above the microwave.

WHERE CAN I BUY A BENIMAR?

Benimar motorhomes in the UK are sold exclusively through the Marquis dealer network. On the continent, the Spanish firm offers everything from van conversions to A-classes and Ford, as well as Fiat, base vehicles. Here, though, it's just carefully selected seven layouts.



the (all low-profile, all Fiat-based) Mileo range. All are adapted to our market, sometimes with major changes to layouts compared to the versions sold in mainland Europe. See the Mileo range at any of the 11 Marquis branches around the UK, from Devon to Durham.

TEL 08000 267777
WEB marquisleisure.co.uk

FOR

- Very high spec throughout
- 150 engine as standard
- Microwave and mains hotplate in kitchen
- Habitation door on UK side
- Neatly integrated sat-nav and reversing camera
- Large, comfy, instant beds for four
- Excellent separate shower

AGAINST

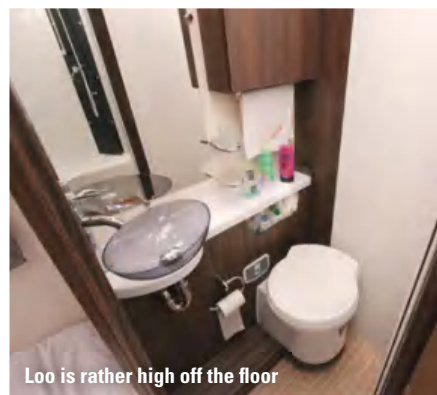
- Too many rattles
- Approximate fit of carpets
- Faux leather trim
- No privacy between shower and rear bedroom
- Payload on 3,500kg chassis





Duckboard and seat in the excellent shower

Spare wheel lives in the large external locker



Loo is rather high off the floor



Drop-down double bed narrows towards the nearside and partially blocks the habitation door

WHAT'S NEW?

If Benimars looked good value in 2015, they look great value in 2016. There's even more kit on the latest models, not least the 148bhp engine and the drop-down bed (which was previously a £1,000 option on the closely related Mileo 294). We were really impressed by the new Dometic Deluxe windows, too, which look good on the outside and simply push open and stay at any angle of your choosing. The flat blinds that they are mated with inside feel like durable, high-quality fittings and do not allow any light in underneath as they are fully framed.

The 264 is one of two new layouts for 2016, the other being the £49,995, 6.99-metre Mileo 286 with its large, seven-seater front lounge and rear garage with huge wardrobe above. The 286 will make an interesting rival for the reigning Motorhome of the Year (Chausson 610), as well as Bürstner's new Ixeo it 680.

TALL STORY

While those who don't notice that issue may have to duck below the drop-down bed (where headroom is still more than 6ft) to enter the lounge, sleeping will not be a problem at all. Both the rear beds are generous in length, with the offside mattress measuring more than two metres.

The beds are extremely comfortable, too, and come with reading lights, thinly padded headboards and (vivid, lime green) cushions. Alongside, the high-gloss walls are cold to the touch in the night, so some soft trim here could be your first DIY addition. Overhead lockers above and large drawers beneath each bed mean there's no shortage of clothing storage, while the large wardrobe has a hanging height of 1.14m.

The homely height of the beds makes for easy access for young and old alike and there are none of the usual concerns about lack of headroom to sit upright to read the morning papers. As you do so, you'll be in splendid isolation, unable to see round the wardrobe to your opposite number in the other bed...

Unless they've finished their *Daily Mail* and bowl of muesli and jumped into the shower, in which case only the frosted shower door hides their blushes. There is no

screen or door between the foot of the beds and the shower, though the toilet area has its own tambour door and, of course, there's the sliding division to separate the rear bedroom from the lounge-cum-second-bedroom.

The second sleeping area takes the form of a manually operated drop-down double bed over the lounge. Only the nearside inward-facing seat's backrest needs moving before it descends and its only position still allows use of the cab seats. You'll need the ladder to access this bed and it's a good size, despite narrowing towards the nearside. The biggest downside is that you'll have to limbo under it to use the habitation door.

HE'S NOT HEAVY

A maximum limit of 150kg for the drop-down bed – or the aforementioned privacy issues – may decide who sleeps where when the 264 is used by a family, but the fact that this Benimar offers large, instantly available and very comfortable beds for four is the real story.

However, if you are planning to regularly travel four up, there are the usual weight considerations. The 264 has a quoted payload of just 280kg on the standard 3,500kg chassis that anyone can drive. That's with just



Generously sized and comfortable single beds have large wardrobe between them

one gas cylinder and 50 litres of water on board (77 litres short of a full fresh tank), while the diesel reservoir holds only 60 litres instead of the usual 90 (therefore adding 30kg to the payload). A family is soon going to use up 280kg, so a free upgrade to a 3,650kg gross weight will be advisable if there are no driving licence implications for you in so doing. Alternatively, regular family use or long-term touring may be better served by the 4,250kg chassis – at a reasonable £1,295 extra.

TIME FOR DIETING?

The payload figures may make you think about a diet but the Benimar comes with a spare tyre, too, located underneath the nearside single bed. On this side, the bed base tips for internal access, while opposite, the frame is fixed and the space below can only be reached from outside. No matter, as the external storage hatches are a good size – plenty big enough for loading large outdoor chairs and the like. You'll be surprised, too, at how much you can lug in here as the locker reaches right across the 'van underneath the wardrobe and the heads of the beds. Internal height is a maximum of 740mm, but if it's bikes that you want to carry then the rear wall has the mountings ready to take a rack.

AND FINALLY

That just leaves us to cover the ablutions facilities, encompassing the offside shower and nearside toilet room. The former is first rate, with a wooden duckboard and plenty of height adjustment on the riser bar, mounted on its striking black background. The inclusion of a seat here (over the wheelarch) was just the ticket when washing my little daughter's feet after a day on the beach.

Opposite, it seems that the wheelarch location has the less desirable effect of raising the swivel loo by about three inches – another indication that this 'van has been designed for the long limbed?

Otherwise, space in the loo area (with the tambour door closed) is better than in many similar layouts. The clear bowl basin is stylish, too, and the visible U-bend underneath seems to consider – for once – that at some time ahead you'll be removing a blockage of hair.

'Our' 264 even came equipped with a Benimar-branded hand towel, as well as a cook's apron and oven glove, both with the same logo. We told you the spec left nothing for the options list...

FACT FILE

PRICE FROM £51,995

PRICE AS TESTED £55,235

EXTRAS FITTED Truma Aventa roof-mounted habitation air-con (£2,495), Zurich faux leather (£745)

OTHER EXTRAS AVAILABLE Comfort-Matic gearbox (£1,695), 4,250kg chassis (£1,295)

TYPE APPROVAL European Whole Vehicle

BERTHS 4

TRAVEL SEATS (INC DRIVER) 4

DIMENSIONS 7.39m L, 2.30m W, 2.89m H (excluding roof air-con)

INTERIOR HEIGHT 1.86m (lounge), 2.09m (kitchen), 1.95m (bathroom/bedroom)

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg (optional 3,650kg or 4,250kg)

PAYLOAD 280kg (standard model, 3,500kg chassis)

BEDS Rear offside single 2.02m x 0.78m, rear nearside single 1.96m x 0.78m, drop-down double 1.90m x 1.40m narrowing to 1.20m on nearside (headroom 0.70m)

FRESH WATER 127 litres (inboard)

WASTE WATER 105 litres (underslung, heated)

GAS 2 x 13kg

LEISURE BATTERY 90Ah

MAINS SOCKETS 3

BASE VEHICLE

FIAT DUCATO CAMPER CHASSIS-CAB

ENGINE 2.3-litre, 148bhp, Euro V+, front-wheel drive, six-speed manual

MPG ON TEST 27.8

COOKING/HEATING

COOKING Thetford Triplex two-burner gas hob with mains hotplate and combined oven/grill

FRIDGE 149-litre Thetford fridge/freezer with automatic energy selection

HEATING Truma Combi 6 gas/mains blown-air

BOILER Truma Combi 6 gas/mains

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Which motorhome says ★★★★★

It's the spec that really impresses with these Benimars, especially the items added purely to suit British buyers. If you want low-level single beds, there's plenty to recommend here; just make sure you get the right gross weight chassis for your needs.



Before you buy consider these...

Bürstner Ixeo time it 726 G



FROM
£55,995

BASED ON Fiat Ducato

NOTES Bürstner does have a couple of low single bed options in its extensive line-up, but if you can live with higher beds over a full-sized garage, then this Sovereign model is worth a close look. As an Ixeo time, it comes with a transverse drop-down bed over the lounge (not the new Ixeo's lengthways drop-down). Like all Sovereign-spec Bürstners, it has a very extensive kit list, including full leather, awning, sat-nav and reversing camera. And 2016 versions get even more equipment.

READ THE ROAD TEST N/a

Rapido 666



FROM
£48,600

BASED ON Fiat Ducato

NOTES Think fixed bed low-profile and it's almost essential to put a Rapido on your must-see list – the French firm has a huge range of (often innovative) floorplans. The 6-Series is the entry-level from this well-respected marque, but, despite the keen pricing, quality remains a strength. There's no drop-down bed in this model but you can have the rear singles fixed at a choice of levels, and there's the option of classic Elegance furniture (shown) or fashionable Montalcino.

READ THE ROAD TEST October 2011

Roller Team T-Line 785



FROM
£46,990

BASED ON Fiat Ducato

NOTES A low-profile that places its rear beds (one of 1.86m and one of 1.96m) low down, forward of an across-the-rear washroom, the T-Line is a great-value 'van from Italy. Body construction is impressive for the price, with Styrofoam insulation and GRP sides and roof. This year, the 10-year water ingress warranty is also joined by five-year cover on the habitation area and the base vehicle for ultimate peace of mind. Here, the drop-down bed doesn't obstruct the entrance.

READ THE ROAD TEST N/a

If you can't afford new...

Looking to buy a pre-owned single bed model? There may not be too much choice but you'll find a few around...

2012 Adria Matrix 680 SL



£44,495

NOTES The rear singles are high up over a garage here, but the Matrix does also come with the desirable drop-down bed up front. Better still, this example has only covered 6,500 miles and Family Travel Centre's autumn price reductions mean that £3,500 has just been knocked off the price. The silver Ducato cab has air-con and cruise control, as well as the standard 130bhp engine. This example also has a towbar and an alarm and comes with a 12-month warranty.

DEALER familytravelcentre.co.uk

2013 Auto-Trail Savannah



£45,995

NOTES This 62-plate Auto-Trail has covered just over 11k miles. It has a very similar layout to the Benimar, with low-level single beds right at the stern, with a (trademark, glazed) wardrobe between them. On a 4,250kg chassis, it's a substantial 7.60m long but only has the 130bhp engine. It has the Super Lo-Line overcab with a large, opening sunroof but is still rather tall on its standard-height chassis. Best news is that Lowdhams' Huddersfield branch has just lopped £4k off the price.

DEALER lowdhams.com

2010 Rapido 7066dF



£38,995

NOTES From considerably higher up the range than the new Rapido above, this 70-Series low-profile has an Al-Ko chassis, a double floor and measures 7.39m overall. Its twin beds are in the more usual high-over-garage setting but the spec and quality here are top notch. Spec includes cab blinds, rear speakers, an oven/grill, and central locking on all of the doors. A reversing camera, alarm and awning have all been fitted and, perhaps best of all, this vehicle has only done just over 11,000 miles.

DEALER hayesleisure.co.uk

Read the road test

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benimar 2016

Back in Britain...

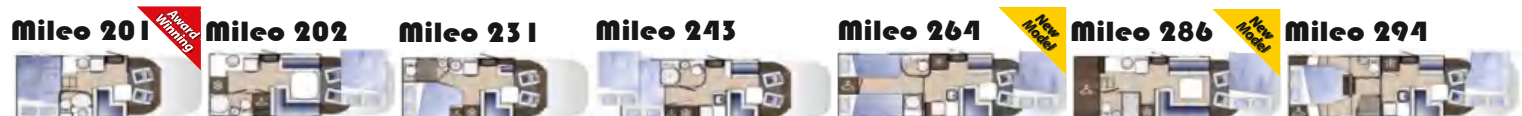
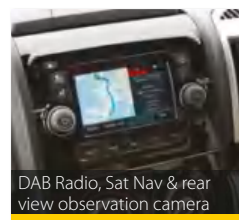
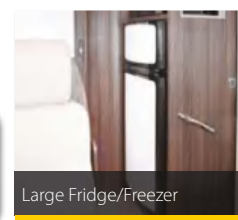


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- **NEW** Fiat high level DAB radio with touch screen sat nav & integrated rear view observation camera
- **NEW** Standard drop down beds (243, 264 & 264)
- **NEW** Optional 'Zurich' Faux leather upholstery with 'Gaho' fabric as standard
- **NEW** Grade III insulation across the range
- **NEW** 12v & 240v sockets in garage
- **NEW** Dometic Deluxe windows
- Right hand drive with **NEW** habitation door with window & pocket on UK side
- **NEW** External BBQ/Shower point on the side of the entrance door
- **NEW** Roof fitted 140w solar panel
- **NEW** Chrome insert on rear bumper
- **NEW** Dometic mini heki rooflights
- **NEW** Removable press studded habitation carpet
- **NEW** Spare wheel as standard on all models
- **NEW** Winter pack including: Upgrade of Truma Combi heating to 6kw, Insulated & heated waste tanks, Insulated external pipes, External thermal screen cover, External fridge vent covers
- **NEW** 'Noisette' furniture style
- GRP and 95% wood-free construction
- High & low fixing points for optional rear mounted cycle rack
- All models on 3500kg chassis (chassis upgrades available)
- Cab air conditioning
- Cruise control



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Going green

If you're not convinced that a campervan has to have a VW roundel on the front, how about this head-turner from Hillside on the new Renault Trafic?

AT A GLANCE • PRICE FROM £33,995 • BERTHS 2/4 • TRAVEL SEATS 4 • OUR TRIP To Ludlow and the Shropshire Hills



I'M speeding along on my way to discover an overlooked part of England, enjoying clear roads after several hours of being stuck on a motorway, including being diverted twice around Spaghetti Junction.

Then a hawk suddenly dives to grab a weasel on the road 50 yards in front of me. I whip on the brakes, and it's only as the vehicle reacts that I remember, "Ah yes, this isn't a car, it's a campervan." For that is what driving a camper based on the new Renault Trafic with the top-of-the-range 120bhp Twin Turbo engine is like.

In terms of day-to-day driving, there are only rare occasions, such as when getting out of the way of a bird of prey finding his supper, that you

realise you are in something that started life as a 'mere' commercial van.

STEALING A MARCH

In the long-anticipated run-up to the launch of the T6 Transporter, Volkswagen's rivals have brought out vans that could pose a serious challenge to the German manufacturer's hegemony. Mercedes' new Vito could be one, and, with the 1.6-litre Twin Turbo engine, the new Renault Trafic certainly is another.

The manual gearbox works well with all of the challenges that a 4.78m-long camper can throw at it. There's plenty of guts in the lower gears to get you moving at a roundabout, but enough

range at the top end to overtake the odd agricultural vehicle without having to change down. Small wonder then that Hillside, the Derby-based van conversion specialist, has chosen the new Trafic as the base of its Ellastone two/four-berth conversion. Hillside is known for its Volkswagens, so the fact that it is experimenting with the Renault shows what potential the new Trafic can have.

GREEN WITH ENVY?

There are, it has to be said, one or two downsides. The cab's interior, for example, doesn't quite live up to the sporty, car-like feel you get from driving (unlike the new T6). There's a bit too much dull

Which motorhome MOTORHOME OF THE MONTH

Words & pictures
Peter Baber



The back seat (from RIB) makes a comfy perch on site and on the road

grey matt plastic, and no chrome edging that might give it a bit of finesse. You do get a cup holder, two USB ports, a smartphone holder and useful blindspot mirrors beneath the main side mirrors. There was also a slight whistle coming through from the edge of the pop-up roof, although this may have been because one of the hinges on our test model had been slightly dented.

You won't notice that the Ellastone here even has an elevating roof when it's down: all you see is the opinion-dividing colour, a brighter-than-bright green. Renault calls it Bamboo Green, although I have never seen bamboo that vivid, either in Britain or the tropics. I thought it would be an interesting conversation piece, at the very

least – as would the Twin Turbo's fuel economy, said to be among the best in its class. But more of that later.

LOVELY LUDLOW

My destination on this break was the Shropshire Hills (the 'blue remembered hills' as described by the poet, A E Housman) and Ludlow.

Shropshire is a county many people overlook as they rush past on the M5/M6. I think some assume that because it's part of the Midlands it's not wild enough. Which is a pity. For eight years I have lived 200 yards away from a Pennine moor, but I have never once seen any of the hawks there dive and get their prey in the way I did with our

feathered friend on the A49. Wild indeed.

The area must inspire poets, however, because, apart from Housman, John Betjeman described Ludlow as "probably the loveliest town in England". As you drive in and first encounter its many timbered houses, it's easy to see why. Most people who come to Ludlow come first to see the castle. Henry VII's eldest son, Arthur, lived here after his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, and had he not proved sickly and died, leaving her obliged to marry his younger brother, Henry, the course of English history could have been different. Because that younger Henry became Henry VIII.

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WHO IS HILLSIDE?

Van conversion specialist, Hillside Leisure, was founded by brothers Adrian and Mark Cross in 2004, with third brother, David, joining in 2007. All three have long experience of both the motor trade and motorhoming and have since built a business that specialises in converting mainly new (but some slightly used) Volkswagen T5 vans, as well as Renaults and Nissans. The company moved to its current premises in Derby in 2012 and now employs 29 people.



Lovely timbered houses in Ludlow



Fridge and grill are hidden behind a door that adds extra storage, too



A bit too much grey plastic in this cab



Good boot space – and a warm wardrobe



The bed is easily made up

is at Smithfield, right on the other side of town, but from there it's only a 10-minute stroll along Friar's Walk, under the town walls, to the castle. Along the way you can learn about Ludlow's equally important role in the English Civil War. When you get to the castle itself, along with the usual joys of climbs to the tower and discovering what a postern is (a secret door which you can use to pop out and surprise your enemies if you are under siege), look out for the ice house that's still intact. When you consider this was the only means that even nobility had for keeping their food fresh, it puts our modern-day discussions about AES, compressor-types (a 50-litre by Waeco here) and three-way fridges into perspective.

A short walk across the Georgian square, next

to the castle, will take you to St Laurence's Church, which dates back to the 11th century and includes some fine stained-glass windows. In Tudor times the town's grammar school boys were actually taught in here, and one of them, Thomas Holland, went on to be one of the chief authors of the King James Bible.

So I say unto ye, Ludlow is a perfect place to visit. The Ludlow Food Festival, claimed to be the oldest such festival in the country and held every September, has cemented the town's reputation as a 'foodie' destination. But throughout the year you are bound to find something to do with food going on. I can't remember being in a town this small before, for example, that has its own oyster bar – and so far from the sea.

DOWN TO BUSINESS

The best place to stay with your motorhome in these parts is Morris Leisure's Ludlow Touring Park. It's almost two miles south of the town on the banks of the Teme, and there's no shuttle bus service, but you can reward yourself on the walk into town by stopping off at the excellent Charlton Arms for a fine view of the river and a pint of Gold from the Ludlow Brewing Company.

The Touring Park is where I set about examining the Ellastone. The camper's internal height with the roof down is 1.37m – enough space for you to crawl in for a quick brew at a motorway service station. But pop the roof up and you get a full 2.58m. This is achieved by unclipping strong catches that fold away



FACT FILE

PRICE FROM £33,995

PRICE AS TESTED £36,945

EXTRAS FITTED Engine upgrade from 90bhp to 120bhp (£1,000), Business Plus Pack – cab air-conditioning, colour-coded bumper, parking sensors (£1,000), alloy wheels (£950)

OTHER EXTRAS AVAILABLE Sport Pack – alloy wheels, metallic paint (£1,000)

TYPE APPROVAL Currently Individual Vehicle Approval (European Whole Vehicle being sought)

BERTHS 2/4

TRAVEL SEATS (INC DRIVER) 4

DIMENSIONS 4.78m L, 1.90 W, 2.00m H

INTERIOR HEIGHT 1.37m roof down, 2.05m-2.58m roof up

MAXIMUM WEIGHT 2,700kg

PAYLOAD 675kg

BEDS Roof bed 1.90m x 1.23m, lower bed 1.82m x 1.22m

FRESH WATER 60 litres (underslung)

WASTE WATER 38 litres (underslung)

GAS 1 x 13kg

LEISURE BATTERY 110Ah

MAINS SOCKETS 2

BASE VEHICLE

RENAULT TRAFIC SWB PANEL VAN

ENGINE 1.6dCi Twin Turbo, 120bhp, Euro V, front-wheel drive, six-speed manual gearbox

MPG ON TEST 29.5

COOKING/HEATING

COOKING Smev two-burner hob and grill

FRIDGE 50-litre Waeco compressor-type

HEATING Eberspächer diesel-fired blown-air

BOILER Surejust 230V/12V water heater



A bit of a squeeze for four around this table, as the driver's seat doesn't swivel

magnetically – a clever idea as there is less chance for the 'tent fabric' to snag.

Getting unpacked and sorted is easy, thanks to an ample, unencumbered boot space behind the rear seat and two lockers under the seat that also hold the rest for the table leg and the Porta Potti. The table surface stashes away behind the driver's seat during travel, but its presence there did not affect this 6ft 6in driver's legroom.

The two back seats themselves are both belted, so you could technically travel as a foursome. You'd struggle to get four people facing each other around the island leg table, however, as the driver's cab seat does not swivel around, and getting three onto the back seat would be an uncomfortable squeeze.

The table itself is not large enough to hold four place settings, although it would be perfectly adequate as a place to lay dishes if people ate on their laps. Still, sitting on the back seat whiling away the time with a glass of wine is a very pleasurable experience, as a bendable reading light keeps you focused on the book – or e-reader – in hand.

COOKING MADE EASY

Cooking, too, from this position, is relaxing. Kitchen designers go on about the all-important triangle – the relationship between the sink, the hob and the fridge. Using these criteria, the Ellastone would pass muster favourably, as even a medium-sized person can reach the integrated

two-burner hob and sink, 50-litre Waeco fridge and the grill without having to leave their sitting position at all.

Best of all, there's a roll-out shelving system that cleverly clips to the front of the fridge when you're not cooking. Along with providing extra workspace, next to the hob where you need it, the shelves are easily big enough to hold your dry goods. I did worry that clipping this shelving back against a recently used grill just after it had expertly cooked my sausages might cause some overheating or, even worse, burn marks. But I needn't have worried. Hillside even includes a small spice rack to the side of the fridge.

I wish I could be as enthusiastic about the little shelves on the wall to the right of the sink. They



The cutlery drawer could have done with a catch to hold it open



The roof bed sits on plastic springs for extra comfort



Plenty of kitchen storage



An easy kitchen to work in, with extra worktop in front of the hob

aren't wide enough to hold anything bigger than a tin foil roll. I had hoped that one of the plastic edges would double up as a catch for the lid to the cutlery tray compartment below, but the handle just missed by a couple of millimetres. Surely that could be sorted out?

There is, however, plenty of storage for pots and pans in three cupboards underneath the work surface, one of which contains the fuse box.

BEDTIME BLISS, UPSTAIRS AND DOWN

Come bedtime, the roof bed comes down easily, and, with plastic springs under the mattress, provides a glorious night of sleep. I was really surprised, on measuring this bed, to find that it is not more than 1.90m long, as the Traffic's box-like

shape (when compared with the VW Transporter, for example) creates a space that feels really roomy. There's no ladder, but you don't need it: a triangular ledge on the front corner of the roof cut-out provides a useful footrest for those not agile enough to get up in one go.

It can also double up as a place to put your glasses, keys and so on, but a reading light up there might have been helpful.

The downstairs bed is only a little bit more tricky to put together, as it involves sliding the seat out and adjusting the cushions. And you can still make use of that bendy spotlight for reading.

At this stage it might be worth saying something about the Eberspächer heater. Even with just one vent in the main cabin it was efficient at making

everything toasty quickly, but it was also noisy, particularly outside the 'van. Had the campsite been full, I might have got black looks from the neighbours. I also woke at four in the morning to find it blowing full blast and, in my half-awake state, struggled to turn it off because, while there is a convenient control panel on the wall by the kitchen, it is not particularly well lit.

The heating system proved more beneficial in the morning, as I discovered that, thanks to the water heater being directly beneath the wardrobe at the rear, your clothes feel cosy and warm from the off. I was tempted to use the external shower that's located here, too, but this was windy Shropshire, not St Tropez (in any case, one of Hillside's understandably enthusiastic staff had





Ludlow is a 'foodie' town



Inside St Laurence's Church



Ludlow's splendid castle

demonstrated it to me very well in the forecourt before I set off.)

Then it was off to explore more of those Shropshire Hills, stopping on the way at the town of Craven Arms where a wonderful memorabilia museum called Land of Lost Content can take you back to a time when kids were excited about a game called Mastermind that involved nothing more than pegs on a board and Craven A Cigarettes' advertising told you that they "won't harm your throat" (err, I think they will). You can park your motorhome easily at the nearby Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, itself worth a visit and a useful source of information about possible walks and activities in the nearby hills.

MORE FRUGAL THAN A VW

So, what about all those comments concerning the Bamboo Green paintwork? Actually, there were none, apart from one campsite owner, and he was positive. In a conventional caravan park with a sea of white GRP, the colour meant the Renault was easy to spot on the way back from the toilet block. Then, on a more back-to-nature site like Greenway Touring and Glamping Park, where I stopped on the second night, the colour blended in very well. When I came back from an evening walk in the hills I was just 10 metres away from the Ellastone before I noticed it snuggled in among the bushes.

The interior is a different story. Why do so

many van converters have a penchant for boring grey? I know it's the colour of speed and cars and everything, but it's as if they want you never to forget that you are in a van. At least the Ellastone's grey interior is moderately enlivened by chic yellow curtains and part of that outer green panelling showing through.

After a final day driving across the Long Mynd, I discovered one feature of the Ellastone that could be its real selling point – fuel efficiency. Despite its power and niftiness, I got 29.5mpg on a drive that involved a lot of braking and gearchanges. A long way from official claims of up to (a VW-beating) 49.6mpg, perhaps, but a happy conclusion from which to come away from those hills.

WHERE TO STAY

LUDLOW TOURING PARK, Ludlow

OPEN All year

PITCHES 135

WEB morris-leisure.co.uk

TEL 01584 878788

A well-kept Caravan Club-affiliated site that is part of the Morris Leisure Group. It includes immaculate shower blocks, a shop, special RV pitches and an adults-only zone. Although it's a mile-and-a-half walk into town, there's no bus. It's a riverside site, but the actual riverbank is out of bounds because it's a Site of Special Scientific Interest – otters nest there.



GREENWAY TOURING AND GLAMPING PARK, Craven Arms

OPEN All year

PITCHES 14

WEB greenwaytouringandglamping.co.uk

TEL 01584 861431

An adults-only Premier Park (above) nestled right in the hills outside Craven Arms. It currently has 14 pitches, of which 10 have 6-amp electric hook-up, although the new owners plan to take advantage of an existing planning permission to extend the total number of pitches to 30. The site includes glamping pods that come with their own outdoor stoves – very romantic in the evening!

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WEB hillsideleisure.co.uk

Which motorhome says ★★★★★

With the Twin Turbo engine, the Ellastone is a real joy to drive. If you can get over the colour (there are many other options) and the usual noisy diesel heater, then it's a great-value alternative to a T6.

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Wonderful, wonderful...



Our Merc-based A-class goes on one final tour – to Copenhagen – with the Editor's family on board

IT arrived just under six months ago to huge fanfare – the first proper Hymer A-class to undergo our long-term test treatment and the most expensive motorhome ever to reside at our HQ for more than a week or two. Travelworld clearly wanted us to enjoy our time with the new Mercedes-based ML-I, loading it up with all sorts of extra kit, not least the 3-litre 190bhp V6 engine and oh-so-lovely 7G automatic gearbox. We would still have liked them to add rear corner steadies, a mains electric option for the Combi boiler and central locking, though.

Despite allegations to the contrary, I have allowed other members of the team to have a go in 'my' motorhome, but right from the off it was reserved for the big editorial busman's holiday in August. For two weeks I would take a break from motorhomes in, erm, a motorhome. But the email facility on my

smartphone would be switched off, work calls would be studiously ignored and my faithful Canon would only come out of its bag just enough to record the trip.

Not only that, but unlike in most previous years, when the Vaughan tour has had a 'make-it-up-as-you-go-along' vibe, dictated by the weather and the mood – and any unbeatable *aires* or campsites stumbled upon that we then couldn't tear ourselves away from – the 2015 summer holiday was booked months ahead. Perhaps because we were heading to Denmark, a country we knew little about, perhaps because Mrs V prefers campsites to *aires*, or maybe just because we were looking for something different this year, we had 13 of our 15 nights pre-planned.

I can't quite remember how we settled on Denmark, except that we (or rather wife, Katy, and daughter, Ariane) wanted a change from France

and it didn't seem too far for Ruben (who, at 19 months, was otherwise unable to join in the debate). Having chosen the country, everyone we spoke to told us it would be expensive – even those (virtually everyone) who had never actually been there. But, beyond that, few folk had even the faintest idea what Denmark would be like.

HAPPY CHAPPIES

Wikipedia tells us that it is the southernmost of the Nordic countries (no doubt the reason why we all expect it to be pricey) and that it has 70 inhabited islands and a population of 5.6 million (about twice that of Greater Manchester, in an area more than twice the size of Wales). The official website of Denmark informs us, more tellingly perhaps, that the highest point in the country is only 170m above sea

Words & pictures
Peter Vaughan

**FINAL
REPORT**



**Big cooker is a big plus
– as is a seven-year-old
to help with the washing-up!**



**Den Gamle By in Aarhus is a fabulous
collection of reconstructed historic Danish buildings**

level (so that's why they like cycling so much!) and reminds us that the nation is famed for architecture and design. The capital, Copenhagen, is also home to one of the world's best restaurants, Noma – so we could expect more than just bacon sandwiches, hopefully. But the most interesting fact is that, in 2013 and 2014, Denmark ranked top in the UN's World Happiness Report. Where better to go on holiday than a country where everyone would be smiling?

Perhaps we should have gone in one of those years, not because in '15 the Danes slipped to third place, but because direct ferry links to the port of Esbjerg stopped running from the UK last summer. Instead, we booked Stena Line's Harwich to Hook of Holland overnight service, which proved an inspired decision. With the best onboard accommodation I've ever experienced on a ship and a fine *à la carte* restaurant,

it was a great start to the holiday. A day – and around 400 miles of easy, toll-free motorway later (which the Mercedes engine swallowed in effortless style) – and we were in Denmark. It was Sunday, so maybe it was just as well that we remembered that the Danes still use the Krone, rather than the Euro.

Our first base, Aarhus, is the country's second largest city, though you'd never guess from the ease with which we drove in and parked on the quayside, just a few minutes' walk from the pedestrian shopping streets and the riverside restaurants on Aboulvarden. Had we felt more energetic, we could easily have cycled from Blommehaven Camping, just 5km away in the pretty Marselis Forest.

With tiered pitches sloping down to the site's own small, stony beach and jetty, Blommehaven was a welcome introduction to the high standards

of Danish camping. The fabulous views across the bay are the high point here, but Ariane was equally taken with the mini-golf and the giant Lego-style building bricks with which she could build a house big enough to sit in. Tempting as it was to relax on site, however, Aarhus' attractions were calling.

Top of our list was the ARoS art museum, not for its nine floors of culture (though we were rather taken with Ron Mueck's 'Boy' – a 4.5m-tall giant sculpture of a crouching child), but for its rooftop panorama. Here, the 360-degree covered walkway gives the cityscape a whole new aspect as you look out through rainbow-coloured glass, the tint changing as constantly as the view as you circle the building. Eventually, we dragged ourselves away as we'd promised the kids a trip to the Tivoli Friheden theme park, only to find it was closed all week...



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AGAINST

- We've had to give it back



Casambu, a 1953 Bedford motorhome

The world viewed in many colours in Aarhus' ARoS museum



Swapping 190 horsepower for one-and-a-half people-power at Camp Hverringe!



Amazing modern architecture is a highlight in Copenhagen

THE BEST TIME TO GO

Every cloud (even a pink one viewed from the top of ARoS) has a silver lining, though, as we soon discovered why a popular park was shut midweek in mid-August. Danish school holidays are earlier than in the UK, with term restarting on 10 August (in 2015). Everywhere we went it was like touring outside the usual holiday period.

This was equally true at Ree Park (a short drive away, near the village of Ebeltoft), where we saw everything from arctic wolves to baby tigers. And even at Aarhus' other top attraction, Den Gamle By, there was no queue to go back in time amongst the living history of reconstructed houses, shops and workshops of the 18th and 19th centuries. I could have spent all day wandering in and out of the characterful buildings, especially as the newest additions to the museum (a street from 1974) brought back so much from my childhood. Even if

many of the Danish brands in the recreated shops were unfamiliar, the bulky TVs and record sleeves were a blast from the past.

Our next stop is as famous as Danish bacon, and a must for anyone – whatever age – on their first visit to Denmark. Of course, I'm referring to Legoland. I first visited in 1970 (when the attraction was two years old and I was four), and I'd been promising myself a return trip ever since. Why did I wait so long?

Miniland's tiny authentic recreations of places in Scandinavia, USA, Netherlands, Japan and the UK comprise of more than 20-million Lego bricks. There are trains, lorries and boats that move – even Lego motorhomes. Of course, unlike the Legoland of 1970, today's attraction in Billund is a true theme park with enough rides to fill your day easily (despite no long queues, once again). And if you're thinking that Legoland Windsor is a much shorter drive, this is the original – and best.

Trying to get a flavour of this Nordic nation in just a two-week holiday meant our time on Jutland (the peninsula, joined to Germany, that pops up into the North Sea) was over. On then to Funen, the central island known as Denmark's garden. Here, the gentle countryside continued to remind us of our home in Lincolnshire but with more space between houses and villages. The key difference is that, as the motorway from its western extremity at Middelfart across to Nyborg in the east is just 47 miles long, you're never far from the Baltic beaches.

A SIMPLY SUPERB SITE

That's especially true when you stay at the five-star Camp Hverringe, near Kerteminde. Now, campsites with as many facilities as this often fill me with dread in the summer season (fearing too many people, too much noise, queues for showers, etc) but here we stayed four nights and wished for longer. There were





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FAULTS ON DELIVERY None

FAULTS THIS MONTH Engine sensor failed and replaced under warranty, headlight warning erroneously illuminated on dash, strip of cab fascia trim coming unstuck

LATEST TRIP 1,800-mile two-week tour of Denmark

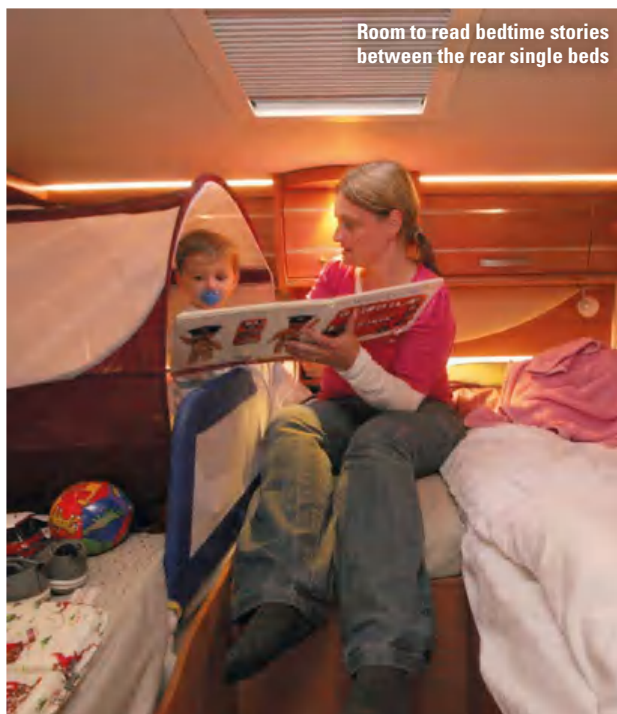
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Parked on the beach at Kerteminde. Plenty of space and no pay-and-display!

times when we had the whole outdoor swimming pool area to ourselves, while Ariane was equally excited by the site's pet rabbits and pedal cars for hire. Katy and I couldn't fault the rest of the site, which must rank as one of the very best I've stayed on anywhere. It even has a motorhome service point where you insert your cassette into a CamperClean machine that empties and washes the toilet, as well as refilling it with chemical. Brilliant!

The relaxing vibe at Hverring made it hard to tear ourselves away to see more of Funen, but we were glad we did when we popped into nearby Kerteminde for lunch. Once again, parking is easy (and free, all day) irrespective of the size of your 'van, while Thorsted's is definitely worth a lunchtime visit for its expansive – but inexpensive (149Kr/£15.52 for adults) – fish buffet. Afterwards, we (just) found room for ice creams in the pleasant high street but you soon learn that one scoop in

Denmark is equivalent to about three UK scoops. Great if you like ice cream, not so great for the diet.

At least the kids can work off those calories at Egeskov, where, as well as the 450-year-old moated Renaissance castle – which would be enough reason to go – smaller people will love the Play Forest, the maze, the tug-of-war ropes and the opportunity to walk on stilts (something of a recurring theme at various Danish attractions). There's enough to occupy you for another full day, with a motor museum (including motorbikes, emergency vehicles, caravans, a 'bay window' VW campervan and 'Casambu', the 1953 Bedford motorhome used by painters, Sigurd and Agnete Swane), a collection of period costumes (including a dress belonging to Queen Marie-Antoinette of France) and gardens described as the most beautiful in Denmark. Nearby, we can also recommend the Super Brugsen supermarket, which appeared rather more

comprehensive than other stores we tried. Think of it as a sort of Danish Waitrose, and not too dear, either.

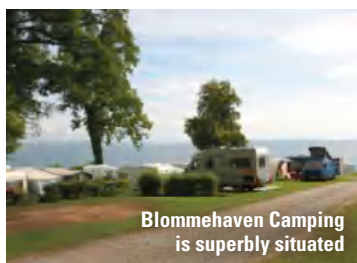
You don't pay for Danish motorways but you will have to stump up for the Storebælt crossing from Funen to Zealand. Consisting of the east bridge of 6.79km and west bridge of 6.61km, with the island of Sprogø in between, the toll is a hefty 710 Krona (£73.96) for motorhomes over 3.5 tonnes (360Kr for those over 6m long but under 3,500kg). Oh well, we were on our way to Copenhagen and capital cities always add significantly to the cost of a holiday.

Our base for visiting the city described as "wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen" in the 1952 Hollywood musical, *Hans Christian Andersen*, was FDM Camping, Tangloppen, a 20-minute train ride south of the city. The S-Line trains run every 10 minutes and our return tickets were just 60Kr (£6.25) each – there's no charge at all for children. The site wasn't, perhaps, quite as wonderful as others we

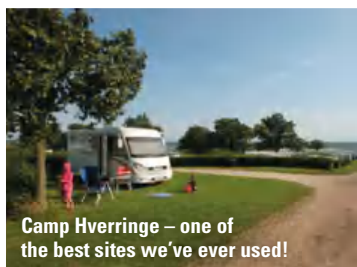




Danish sites were first-class and the ML-I got many an admiring look



Blommehaven Camping is superbly situated



Camp Hverringe – one of the best sites we've ever used!



The Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen is an odd mix of oriental buildings, roller coasters and restaurants that's utterly alluring

WHERE TO STAY

BLOMMEHAVEN CAMPING,

Ømeredevej 35, 8270 Højbjerg

OPEN 20 March – 18 October

PITCHES 395

WEB camping-blommehaven.dk

TEL 0045 8627 0207

Superbly kept site just outside Aarhus, with small, stony beach and views across the bay. Highly recommended. Price (2 adults, high season, 2015) 224Kr (£23.33) per night (plus electricity charged based on usage)

FÅRUP SØ CAMPING, Fårupvej 58,

7300 Jelling

OPEN 28 March – 13 September

PITCHES 373

WEB faarup-soe.dk-camp.dk

TEL 0045 7587 1344

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CAMP HVERRINGE, Blåsenborgvej

200, 5380 Dalby/Kerteminde

OPEN 13 March – 18 October

PITCHES 394 **WEB** camphverringe.dk

TEL 0045 6534 1052

A five-star site that more than lives up to this rating. Quiet, coastal location and superb facilities for kids. Price (2 adults, high season, 2015) 330Kr (£34.75) per night, including electricity

FDM CAMPING, TANGLOPPEN,

Tangloppen 2, Ishøj Havn, 2635 Ishøj

OPEN All year **PITCHES** 90

WEB fdm.dk/camping

TEL 0045 4354 0767

On a peninsula, surrounded by water and just a 15-minute walk to the beach, this site is ideal for visiting Copenhagen. Price (2 adults, high season, 2015) 198Kr (£20.63) per night, including electricity

You must have a valid Camping Card (cost 110Kr) to stay at these and other Danish campsites. See danishcampsites.dk

stayed on in Denmark but our only regret here was not having time to go to the superb, sandy beach (the best we saw on our tour), just a 15-minute walk away.

The whole trip added up to 1,818 miles from home in Lincolnshire and back. With 4,784 miles on the clock, the Merc decided it needed its second drink of AdBlue in our tenure. Over the whole of our continental tour, we managed an average of 22.2mpg, more than respectable when you consider the performance on offer from Merc's most potent powerplant and the fact that, on this trip, we were running close to the maximum GVW of 3,880kg.

THE HYMER WAS FAB, TOO

We'd discovered early on that the ML-I only works as a 3.5-tonne 'van if you go light on the options and avoid the temptation of this particular engine/gearbox combo – which weighs an extra 98kg compared with the manual 2.1-litre 163bhp version. So, with 'ours' replated (a no-cost exercise but one that precluded two of the team from any further ML-I outings, due to

licence restrictions), we could make proper use of the full-sized garage. In there, we loaded two pushbikes (one adult's, one child's), three large and comfy outdoor chairs, two tables, Ruben's sit-on car and highchair – and still we had room to spare. Inside, we had clothes for every eventuality (there are two wardrobes and who knows what summer will be like in northern Europe?) and my own 'sewing bee' had even packed her trusty Brother. That caused a stir on site as she sat outside sewing, I can tell you!

On site, we loved the Hymer's instant beds for four – the kids taking the rear singles, so we could put them to bed and retain the lounge – and adults in the drop-down double, which still ranks as one of the comfiest motorhome berths around (even if its overhead lighting is too bright). The full cooker (as fitted to many British 'vans but rare in a German) won more plaudits, but more surprising was just how good the compact lounge proved when the weather forced us indoors. The huge A-class windscreen beats any rear lounge for vistas (we had

sea views from two of our chosen campsites) and there's a good sofa, as well as two superb armchairs. Even better, the part-leather trim is a very practical reposte to kids' messy eating and sticky fingers.

The A-class body may add almost £11k to the price, compared with its ML-T low-profile sister model, but the big windscreen is equally welcome for rear seat passengers who enjoy far better views of your travels than in most 'vans. And yet, because the ML-I is 130mm slimmer than other Hymer A-classes, it feels a lot less daunting on roads and routes where space is at a premium.

Being a Hymer A-class – one costing £86k – it's no surprise that 'our' ML-I has impressed with its quality. That's evident from the exemplary fit and finish of the bodywork, the lack of rattles, right through to the way the cab and habitation doors close. I'll leave the last word then to my motorhome-loving seven-year-old, who proclaimed, "Daddy, the only thing wrong with this motorhome is the toilet roll holder." I think she's after my job...

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Don Amott Leisure Kingdom

The Derby dealership once known for its wide range of budget Italian coachbuilts is now focusing on British-built 'vans, including its own range of VW campers

If you think this company has a rather grand-sounding name, don't forget its founder, the eponymous Don, was billed as 'King of Caravans' for the success of the business he started back in 1963. It's his son, also Don, who rules now, having taken over at the age of just 25, at a business that's notched up over half a century as a purveyor of motorhomes, as well as touring caravans and caravan holiday homes.

It's certainly got the space to cope. The retail premises – set in some 24 acres near Derby – really only tell some of

the story. Today, holiday parks, woodlands and more are in the Don Amott portfolio. But the site at Hilton remains the focal point.

Gone are the heady days when Don Amott led the way in affordable coachbuilt motorhomes from Italy via the likes of CI, Mobilvetta, Elnagh, McLouis and more. Today, the business concentrates solely on new franchises for the UK's main motorhome producers.

But it's certainly a dealership that's gone from strength to strength. Another major recent initiative has been its arrangement to sell Camper King VW T5-based campers – made to its own designs. Ok, it's not the only dealer to latch onto this booming used T5/new conversion sector (see pages 16 to 61), but it's certainly going for it in a wholehearted way. As Sales Executive, Aaron Parkin (below), says, "It is a great venture we have made into dealing with Camper King and it is a pleasure to be a part of the VW community now."

It's also the overall back-up that impresses. The service centre boasts 16 bays – it's part of the National Caravan Council's Approved Workshop Scheme – as well as an MoT test centre. Also on-site is a huge accessories shop. Plus a café. Even extensive customer parking facilities. And more.

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WEB: leisurekingdom.co.uk

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£29,995

BASE VEHICLE Citroën Dispatch **ENGINE** 2-litre, 120bhp, Euro IV **MILEAGE** 13,100 **BERTHS** 2

TRAVEL SEATS 3 **WARRANTY** 6 months **DIMENSIONS** 5.64m L, 1.96m W, 2.54m H

Presented in almost perfect condition, it's hard to believe this two-berth micro-coachbuilt is over two years old. Its floorplan is simply a slightly smaller version of the popular end kitchen/corner washroom arrangement, with a lounge comprising nearside dinette and offside settee.

Sleeping is on two singles – each 1.83m by 0.74m – that extend into the cab area, or a double made from sliding out the settee base to give a generous 1.75m width. That dinette also offers the option of a third forward-facing travel seat.

At the back, the kitchen includes a sink with

drainer and a four-ring hob with grill, plus a three-way Dometic 80-litre fridge.

Adjacent, the lined washroom includes a flip-down basin and swivel-bowl toilet, with curtaining for the shower area. An owner addition here is a handy set of hooks.

Storage is particularly good throughout for a vehicle so small, helped by the overcab locker, as well as lots of space in the settee base and plenty of upper-level side locker space.

The only downside of the Citroën Dispatch base is it's an almost impossible scramble to get from the cab seats to the living quarters. But you'll get great driving and car-like capabilities from the 120bhp engine, whose six-speed manual gearbox will also help deliver excellent fuel economy. All that could possibly count against it is the lack of cab air-conditioning.

This Rio has had two previous owners. Note, also, you have the additional peace of mind that Don Amott was a Nu Venture dealer until recently, and still retains close links with this small, independent producer.

STAR BUY



WATCH OUT FOR There's only a small wardrobe

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Micro-coachbuilt that thinks big
- Perfect all-round condition



2013 BAILEY APPROACH SE 760

£39,995

BASE VEHICLE Peugeot Boxer Al-Ko **ENGINE** 2.2-litre, 130bhp, Euro V **MILEAGE** 5,750 **BERTHS** 6 **TRAVEL SEATS** 6
WARRANTY 6 months, plus balance of Peugeot 3-year warranty and bodysheer integrity guarantee
DIMENSIONS 7.52m L, 2.42m W, 2.99m H

It might be the same age as the Nu Venture here, but there the similarities end. This big Bailey is all set up to cater for up to six folk on board. Plus their luggage – thanks to a chassis rated at 3,850kg and a 600kg-plus payload.

One of just two pre-owned Baileys on the forecourt – same age and model – this example was actually traded in for a brand-new Bailey, the 745 fixed bed model. It was also sold originally by

Don Amott and it's had just the one owner.

Curiously, there's an awning that's obviously too short for the vehicle – and, worse, ends part way over the door. There's more joy with some of the other accessories – a bike rack, security door handle, reversing camera, TV aerial and an Avtex TV in the rear lounge. Other noteworthy extras include Tyron Safety Bands, Gaslow gas tank system, even a Diamondbrite external finish.

It's certainly kept its value well – brand-new and before any extras were fitted, it would have been just over £45,000.

Apart from a couple of screw holes where the first owners obviously added things, there's just a few scrapes in the sink to suggest this Bailey has had anything other than the easiest of lives.

There are plenty of these kicking around at dealers now. The trick is to find one in great overall condition and with just a bit of extra specification to make it an even better value proposition. Just like this.



WATCH OUT FOR Check if your driving licence allows for the 3,850kg maximum weight

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Full six-berth capabilities
- Crash-tested rear seating

2014 CAMPER KING

£32,995

BASE VEHICLE Volkswagen Transporter T5 T28 **ENGINE** 2-litre, 101bhp, Euro V **MILEAGE** 19,423 **BERTHS** 4 **TRAVEL SEATS** 5
WARRANTY 12 months (conversion), plus balance of VW three-year warranty **DIMENSIONS** 4.89m L, 1.90m W, 1.98m H

There's a VW camper revolution going on out there – as folk are realising the sheer affordability of a pre-owned T5 Transporter van given a whole new lease of life with a camper conversion. And this is a typical example.

It's only been a year since Don Amott announced a tie-up with converter, Camper King – and such has been their success that at least half of the showroom here has been given over to some rather rakish campervans, offering all kinds of colour schemes and prices from under £30,000.

Those 20in alloys are standard fare for Camper Kings from Don Amott (check that you're happy with what that does to the ride quality!), but there are plenty of paintwork alternatives to the Candy White – and alternative interior colour schemes to the radical red and 'Paul Smith' stripy floor, offset by black quilted upholstery.

This T5 is a barn door model. The conversion includes Camper King's own rear seat design, which is easy to slide out into a small 1.76m by 1.16m bed. It lacks head restraints, too,



so is best used only for kids in full child seats.

Above, the elevating roof can't match the qualities of German-sourced products, but it's easy to operate. The acrylic windows let in plenty of light, it's just a pity there's no ventilation up there. And the mattress is woefully thin.

The front seat is set to get a swivel, but the table – which moves along the rail on the kitchen unit – will struggle to cope with more than two.

There's the balance of the T5's initial three-year warranty here, plus a 12-month warranty on the conversion.

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Individualistic interior colouring
- Keen pricing



WATCH OUT FOR Always look beyond the bright colours and big alloys in any camper like this

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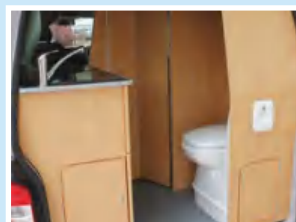
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Pullingers Leisure Vehicles

This Essex dealership is tight on space but not short of premium product for you to purchase

Founded in 1993 by his parents, Barry and Jane Pullinger, it's son Barrie (pictured) who looks after the day-to-day running of the eponymous business in Essex.

They've occupied the same premises from day one, and it's fair to say their growth over the years is seeing them almost at bursting point.

However, as Barrie explains, "We've recently bought the premises, which means we can now start making improvements. We were renting before, but the owner fell ill and wanted to sell."

Barry and Barrie aren't the only father and son team, either. John and Bill Humphries serve in the workshop, although the truth is most folk in the small team here are happy to turn their hands to any aspect of helping out.

Pullingers has always gone for a more premium product, the whole family regularly using their motorhomes, too, mainly in conjunction with Barrie's highly successful other career in karting.

Says Barrie, "We still use motorhomes when we can and we manage to fit in the racing and the



TOP TIP

Dealers who are also regular motorcaravanners, like the Pullingers, always have a better insight into the products they sell

running of this place. We're always at the end of the phone when we're away. We've been busy, but luckily everyone here is happy to do a bit of everything."

Despite its size limitations, what you do get here is a welcome customer seating area, a showroom and workshop. True, the outside display really packs them in, but it doesn't take long to bring a vehicle out if you want a close look.

NEW FRANCHISES: Dethleffs, Le Voyageur, Pilote, Sunlight

WEB: pullingers.co.uk



2001 AUTO-TRAIL ARAPAHO

£24,995

BASE VEHICLE Fiat Ducato AI-Ko tag-axle **ENGINE** 2.8-litre, 122bhp, Euro III **MILEAGE** 65,309 **BERTHS** 6

TRAVEL SEATS 4 **WARRANTY** 12 months **DIMENSIONS** 8.37m L, 2.31m W, 3.05m H

Are you a newcomer family to motorcaravanning? Or a couple who just want as much space as possible for as little outlay as possible?

You're getting a lot of motorhome for your money here, even if some aspects of this 14-year-old Auto-Trail are – not unexpectedly – looking a bit tired. But the engine is a cracker and well capable of heaving around this Arapaho in all its tag-axle glory. It's on the mighty 4,500kg chassis, too, which offered well over 700kg of payload before extras were fitted.

This example lists four former keepers, but the last ones had it from 2004 – and there are signs they really made the most of it, also adding items like the TV, CD player, plenty of extra speakers and more along the way. They must have enjoyed it: they ended up swapping it for another tag-axle, this time from Dethleffs and an A-class.

An unusual feature of this Arapaho is the L-shaped rear lounge – far more popular was the U-shaped version. Nevertheless, it does allow for a nearside picture window. A pullman dinette



behind the driver provides a second seating area.

Opposite the dinette is a particularly generous kitchen, with full cooker, sink with drainer, and plenty of worktop, as well as storage.

Indeed, storage is a real strong point of this Auto-Trail, with its double wardrobe arrangement (the original vacuum cleaner is still in here) and no shortage of overhead lockers.

This Arapaho also has the roof rack and ladder option, plus a roof box has been added, along with a reversing camera, towbar and electrics, four-bike rack, even two large spotlights at the back.



WATCH OUT FOR Signs of heavy use are here

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Space per £
- High specification

2008 PILOTE RÉFÉRENCE P690

£34,995

BASE VEHICLE Peugeot Boxer **ENGINE** 3-litre, 157bhp, Euro IV **MILEAGE** 32,000 **BERTHS** 4
TRAVEL SEATS 4 **WARRANTY** 12 months **DIMENSIONS** 6.95m L, 2.30m W, 2.85m H

A slightly high price for a Pilote of this age? Look again, because this has the 3-litre engine option, as well as a different lounge layout that gives you two extra single forward-facing seats for travel, then converting to short settees for on-site use. Référence denotes a higher level of trim from France's Pilote – with items such as captain's-style swivel seats, air-conditioning and dashboard trim in the cab. A partial double-floor construction means the floor is flat throughout, although there's a slight step up into the washroom and most folk will want ladder-access to the transverse double bed across the back.

You get a pretty full kitchen here, too. It's an unusual shape, but there's space for a Smev cooker (four-ring hob, plus oven/grill combination) and a circular sink with a decent amount of worktop between (including an inset waste bin). There's also generous locker and drawer storage here, while across the corridor is a 150-litre fridge/freezer with AES (automatic energy selection). The locker above this has a slide-out holder for a TV. Overhead, a wind-up sunroof provides both daylight and ventilation.

Next door to the kitchen, the washroom is more spacious than first impressions might suggest. There's a step-in shower with folding doors, plus a corner unit with 'salad bowl' handbasin and a swivel-bowl toilet.

Additions to the initial specification extend to two extra double mains sockets, a reversing camera, double bike rack, awning, door mirror guards, solar panel and inverter.

There are plenty of signs of use throughout, but nothing to suggest any long-term untoward damage.



WATCH OUT FOR It's a 3,850kg chassis – check your driving licence

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Generous kitchen
- Roomy washroom

2010 DETHLEFFS SUMMER EDITION T5975

£31,995

BASE VEHICLE Ford Transit **ENGINE** 2.2-litre, 125bhp, Euro V **MILEAGE** 46,000 **BERTHS** 3 **TRAVEL SEATS** 4
WARRANTY 12 months **DIMENSIONS** 6.16m L, 2.15m W, 2.67m H



WATCH OUT FOR Cramped kitchen lacks storage and worktop

KEY SELLING POINTS

- Definitely one for Ford fans
- Large permanent double bed

You'd expect a holder of the Dethleffs franchise would be happy to take one back in part-exchange and you'd be right here – especially as it was traded in for a new Globebus, from Dethleffs.

This one has come full circle. It was retailed new by Pullingers, then sold privately before being traded back in at the Essex dealership.

It's a three-berth for sleeping and offers four travel seats, so this Ford Transit-based compact low-profile has plenty of versatility. And despite its near-van-conversion dimensions, it has a large permanent bed at the back.

You might have to be a little bit athletic at bedtime, though – that fixed rear double is set high, with access via a ladder. However, its location means there's generous storage space underneath, probably the key reason for buying this 'van. The garage is accessible by a single exterior hatch, and there's a low-level wardrobe with tambour door under the bed, too.

The 125bhp engine will be more than adequate in a vehicle of this size, which has a 3,500kg maximum weight. Cab equipment includes twin



STAR BUY

airbags, a Sony stereo and air-conditioning, but the swivel seats don't get the same suede-style blue upholstery as the rest of the lounge.

Rear seating comprises a half-dinette and a single inward-facing seat on the offside. There's no overcab sunroof and no window in the habitation door (Dethleffs' hallmark arched design), so there could be a tendency for things to be a bit dark in here.

The kitchen is compact, but there's a Spinflo Duplex grill/oven, while the washroom opposite is slightly tight on space. There are also some useful fitted extras on this example, though – a reversing camera and a Fiamma awning, plus additional security locks to the habitation and storage doors.

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2014 64Autosleeper Broadway EK LT 1 owner, 8 k miles £46,995
2012 61Chausson Welcome 64, 130 BHP 22k miles £36,995
2013 63Carado T138 6mtre Central Drop Down Bed 9k miles £34,995
2010 60Wild Ax Constellation, Van Conversion 120BHP 1 Owner £34,995
2010 60 Dethleffs Summer Edition Ford Compact Low Profile £31,995
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2011 11 Autoroller 706 6 berth, 6 travel seats 130BHP £29,995
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Magic Edition Black T7151-4 DBM Island Bed, Pull Down Bed £71,538
Globebus T4, High Single Beds, 150 Auto, Laguna Blue £57,221
Advantage I7051 DBM 150 Auto Silver Alloys £72,806
Esprit Comfort I 7150 EB 180 Auto, Alde, 4500KG Al Ko £87,455
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2009 09 Concorde Credo 735H Mercedes 3.0L Auto, High Spec £69,995
2014 14 Dethleffs Summer Edition I 6701 130 BHP 10k miles £59,995
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2009 59 Pilote Explorateur G830LCE Tag Island Bed, 18k, Leather £54,995
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Adria Compact Plus SP



FROM
£46,090

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 3/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.12m W, 2.71m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES Redesigned for 2016 and tested in last month's issue, the Compact is a great-looking example of the transverse bed/garage layout.

Auto-Sleeper Nuevo ES



FROM
£50,600

BASED ON Peugeot Boxer
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 4/4
DIMENSIONS 5.71m L, 2.32m W, 3.01m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES A variation on the rear kitchen/corner washroom theme, this Nuevo adds an overcab bed and half-dinette for extra versatility.

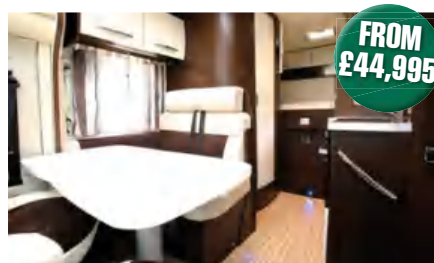
Bailey Advance 615



FROM
£38,515

BASED ON Peugeot Boxer Al-Ko
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 2/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.35m W, 2.78m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES A rear lounge for relaxing, a half-dinette for passenger-carrying and an Al-Ko chassis for great driving characteristics. It's well priced, too.

Benimar Mileo 201



FROM
£44,995

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 3/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.30m W, 2.89m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES The reigning Compact Motorhome of the Year, the garage-layout Mileo impresses with its high spec and UK-friendly design.

Bürstner Ixeo Time it 586



FROM
£49,995

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 4/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.30m W, 2.75m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES One of the original drop-down bed compact models, this Bürstner has great use of space and the spec even includes full leather.

Hymer Van 314 SL



FROM
£42,250

BASED ON Fiat Ducato Al-Ko
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 2-3/4
DIMENSIONS 5.45m L, 2.22m W, 2.77m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES Suddenly, six metres seems big! The baby Hymer manages to fit a fixed bed (at a choice of heights) in its teeny, top-quality body.

Pilote Galaxy G600L



FROM
£51,396

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 2-4/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.30m W, 2.85m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES The A-class cab and front lounge layout mean acres of space inside Pilote's smallest Galaxy. Available in three levels of spec.

Swift Bolero 612EK



FROM
£55,450

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 2/2
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.38m W, 2.79m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES This compact model is a new layout in the freshly redesigned Bolero range. Black Edition trim means it looks pretty, but it's pricey, too.

Swift Rio 325



FROM
£45,244

BASED ON Fiat Ducato
BERTHS/TRAVEL SEATS 2/4
DIMENSIONS 5.99m L, 2.26m W, 2.78m H
MAXIMUM WEIGHT 3,500kg
NOTES At last, a Rio that's under 6m long, though the tailgate is gone. Garage has electric up/down bed above but just one access door.

Display Classifieds

ACCESSORIES



Ferry Good for Al-ko

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AUTOCUISE GLENEAGLE, 2009, 17500mils, £34995 ONO Sleeping two, either separate or one large double. All original features including 80Lts LPG tank, and toe bar. MOT until Aug 2016. In very good condition Private - Wirral - 0775398367 01512011759 any time (905240)



AUTOCUISE STARFIRE, 2011, 14400mils, £29000 2 berth, many extras: Thatcham alarm, awning, roof bars, ladder, 2xbike rack, status aerial, winter pack & lux pack fitted, paintseal applied. No smokers/pets. Good condition. MoT March 2016. Private - Merseyside - 01517244492 / 07977777691 (905933)



AUTOHOMES WAY FINDER EQUIPE, 1998, 32000mils, £10995 Cruise control. Air ride. Awning. Bike rack. 4 New Tyres. Clutch 2014. None smokers. No pets. 12 months MoT. Private - Devon - 01271867369 10am/9pm (905221)



AUTO-SLEEPERS BROADWAY FB, 2013, 7200mils, £44000 Excellent condition with Premium Pack fitted. 2000W Inverter and bicycle rack. Tow bar and Peugeot 107 Verve also for sale. 5yr old. £4000. Private - Dumfries and Galloway - 07712583772 01387840321 anytime (905712)



AUTO-SLEEPERS RAVENNA, 2004, £18995 1 owner. Approx 41500 miles. FSH. Taxed December 2015, MOT April 2016. 4 Berth. Rear lounge. Sep shower/wc, Gas/ electric cooker, fridge, water heater & heating. Fiamma Awning/Privacy Room; cycle rack; Cobra alarm. No pets/smokers. Excellent Condition. Private - 07938 774169 (905774)



AUTO-SLEEPERS SYMBOL, 2006, 47000mils, £24000 2.2hdi, Immaculate inside and out. Non smokers. No animals or children. 2 single or 1 double bed. Gas/electric water heating. Diesel heating. Full oven. 3 way fridge. Cassette toilet / shower / sink back storage box, MOT 2016. Must Be Seen. Private - Kent - 07950523560 (904856)

AUTO-TRAIL FRONTIER MOHAWK

Frontier Mohawk, 2015, 1,400mils, £50000 New Shape Model, Low Profile Registered 2015, 8 months old, still has Manufacturers Warranty. Pick up an absolute bargain! New price £65,000. Quick sale required due to illness of a family member. New shape Fiat Autotrail Mohawk 150 bhp, 2.3 JTD engine. We have used the vehicle once, the shower has never been used, the cooker used once to oil the kettle. So, pretty much a perfect unused Motorhome ready to go.



Mint condition, no dents, scuff or blemishes internally. Four berth, a double fixed bed over drivers cab, a double fixed bed in the rear above a garage. Half dinette layout, which has two rear seats facing forward with seatbelts. Loads of extras included, private plate not included in sale. Inspection welcome. Private - Essex - 07530 297398 (905484)



AUTO-TRAIL V-LINE 610, 2015, 107mils, £45000 ONO Extras: starter pack, media pack 2, chest of drawers in rear lounge, carbon black metallic paintwork with colour coded bumper. Sudden death forces sale. Private - Devon - 01822 853202 anytime(904205)



AUTO-TRAIL TRACKER EKS LL, 2008, 25660mils, £28450 Full spec + Gaslow LPG system, Avtex TV, bike rack, vinyl flooring. Rear view mirror camera, window alarms, Phantom Tracker, Cab AirCon, Cruise Control. No pets, smokers, children. Private - Lincolnshire - 01526323833 07748648160 anytime (905524)



AUTO-TRAIL CHEYENNE 696 G, 2004, £19995 ONO One owner from new. SE model, 15500 miles, large garage, awning, brand new Thatcham cat1 alarm/immob. Brand new tyres all round and cam belt fitted, both on account of age. Recent service/new MOT-09/16. Private - Hertfordshire - 07480315515 (904618)



AUTO-TRAIL CHEYENNE 2005, 24300mils, £23500 Mercedes 313CDI, FSH. New air suspension. Full width towbar. Heosafe cab locks. Safe. Reversing camera. New MB exhaust. Bike rack. 2 leisure batteries. 250w solar panel. Gasglow system. New Michelin Agilis Camping tyres. New vehicle battery. Excellent con. Private - Somerset - 07921 874386 (906482)



BURSTNER DELFIN 680, 2007, 22,300mils, £25250 ONO Avtec freeview tv. Toilet, separate shower. Cobra alarm. Reversing camera. Dual powered water heater. Panoramic sunroof. Cab air con. New tyres. 12 months MoT. Private - East Yorkshire - 07875381259 anytime (905880)



CONCORDE CHARISMA I 830 F, 2004, 40mils, £49995 Exceptional in condition & spec. Daytime running lights. Wood effect dash. Automatic diff lock. Cruise control. 180 litre gas tank. 2x11 kilo gas bottles. 120l WC tank, ceramic flush WC. 5.5m awning. Garage. Private Berkshire 07774721847/ 01344466083 any time (900675)

DETHLEFFS EIGHTY II T6700 SPECIAL EDITION

Eighty II T6700 Special Edition, 2012, 22,000mils, £59995 ONO Luxuriously Equipped, Elegant, Modern Bi-Colour Furniture, Limited Only 80 Units Manufactured. Leather, Coffee Machine, 190L Fridge/Freezer, Auto Satellite, Twin Solar Panels, Avtex 21.5" Led TV, Kenwood DNN9230dab Stereo/ Navigation, Alde Winter Comfort Pack Styrofoam, Alde Heat Exchanger, Alde Heating, Second Battery, Gaslow System, Cat1 Alarm Gemini, Alloys, VB Air Suspension 4 Corner Self Levelling, Multiplex Floor, Mattress Upgrade 7 Zone, Flyscreen, 'Luxus' Control Panel, Bike Racks 4. Cost £75,000 and the 'Eighty II' Special Edition had an additional £15,000 of Extra's Included, This really is Luxury, Loaded and Ready...!!! Private - Hampshire - 07920002001 08.00-20.00 (906217)



EAST NEUK FIFER S, 2008, 43000mils, £24000 A fantastic example of this award winning design. Many extras and upgrades. Private - Surrey - 07784 121 397 Anytime (904427)



EAST NEUK FIFER TOURING, 2008, 47000mils, £21750 ONO Unique opportunity to purchase award winning custom built motorhome. vgc. extras Private - Surrey - 07946568889 02088782844 early morning or evening (905758)

EURA MOBIL INTEGRA I 840 EB

Integra I 840 EB, 2010, 19000mils, £56000 Tag Axle, One owner, Euro 4 emissions, FSH 3 litre,160 PS. Cruise control. Webasto engine heater. Spare wheel. 4 cycle carrier. 2 solar panels. Oyster 85 cm dish double LNB with skew. Sine inverter. 12/24 volt system with recording facilities, 2 TVs,Separate Shower. Tower with gas oven with Rotisserie, 3 burner hob. Pull out wire baskets in cupboards. Alde Heating. Two Large single beds that draw together as a double, pull down double over cab, plus single settee. Spare wheel. Fitted LPG tanks. Fiamma Awning. 2 leisure batteries. Pioneer sat nav. with additional surround sound. Pop up bar cabinet. Two tone brown leather interior fitted carpets. Large double door garage. Private - Glamorgan - 07816119436 Before late evening (905542)



FOREST RIVER LEXINGTON 255, 2004, 47150mils, £24995 Ford 6.0 T/D, Auto, Twin slideout, Reversing monitor, Generator, Roof/auto A/C, Convection/Microwave, Tow bar, Large awning, Fridge/freezer, Built in TV, Solar Panel, Leather seating, Paul Dudley RV Trade - Oxfordshire - 07910 115831/ 01993 200848 Any time (903813)



HYMER STARLINE 640, 2003, 39000mils, £23500 ONO LHD Mercedes 2.7. Dinette vers. 6 seatbelts. Huge storage. Many extras e.g. Awning, bike rack, roof-bars/ladder, extra battery, carpets, external bbq, alloys, cruise control, air-rides, tv, microwave. Superb. Private - Leicestershire - 07525827171 01163500007 Evening (904079)



HYMER S-740 2002, 44000mils, £34995 Merc-sprinter S740, full service history. Large garage with moved. Immaculate inside and out. Very rare in this condition. Fully loaded, air con, satellite, reverse camera, tow bar. Full leather, elegance layout. New MoT 2016. South Lanarkshire 01355236367/ 07896626198 (904284)



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HYMER B-CLASS 675 SL

B-Class 675 SL, 2010, 48700mils, £57500 ONO Mercedes 519 3.0Ltr Auto. 5.3Tonne LHD. Rear Air Bags. Payload 1.2 Tonne. 2 Single 1Double Bed. Solar 120W. 2x110 Batteries Alarm Tracker Central Lock. Security Locks. Refillable Gas. Oyster Sat TV/DVD. S class table. SOG. Roof bars and Ladder. Rev Camera. Leather Upholstery Cream. Inverter. Electric/Gas water/air. Truma. Tec Tower. Oven Freezer Fridge. 100Ltr Fuel tank. Large Garage with Aluminium Floor.



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LA STRADA REGENT L, 2004, 86000mils, £17950 1 owner, pull down double bed with fixed steps built into kitchen Extras include, 2 bike rack, Dometic oven large Heki roof window, Fiamma awning, reversing camera **Private - W Sussex - 01903 815403 (904556)**



MCL MOTORHOMES 800, 2004, 31000mils, £79995 Bespoke, luxury A-Class with every conceivable option. Slide-out, Electric Awning, 2 x TVs. Superb mirrored Stateroom, Marble bath and kitchen, Cost £250k New! Immaculate condition. Bargain! **Private - Lancashire - 01253 734199 07909 231414 Any (905730)**



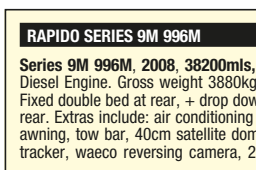
MERCEDES SPRINTER 1998, 84,000mils, £7750 ONO 2.9 TD, 1 year MOT, 2 berth, cab a/c, 3 way fridge, hot and cold water, 60 litre fresh water tank, eberspacher diesel heater, fiamma bike rack, TV plus status arial, omnistor awning, one owner. **Private - Stirlingshire - 01786833686 anytime (900509)**



MOOVEO P608, 2008, £22750 ONO 2.2 diesel, 52,500, with bike rack tow bar, oven 3 ring hob, fixed bed, toilet/shower, 3 way fridge, tv/ dvd mot may 2016 cover VGC some service history, gas bottles, many extras, ready to go. **Private - Wiltshire - 07766695383 anytime (905344)**



RAPIDO SERIES 70 7098F, 2007, 23136mils, £31000 Fiat 3.0Ltr 4 berth/seat belts. FSH. French bed, large fridge, oven, grill, 3 ring hob. Camos satellite, solar panel, class 1 alarm. Awning, bike rack, ladder. Truma heating. Superb condition. **Private - West Glamorgan - 07736680118 (904841)**



RAPIDO SERIES 9M 996M

Series 9M 996M, 2008, 38200mils, £39950 ONO A Class, Auto, V6 Mercedes Diesel Engine. Gross weight 3880kg. 4 Berth. Bathroom with separate shower. Fixed double bed at rear, + drop down double bed over cab. Large garage at the rear. Extras include: air conditioning unit, 130 watt solar panel, Fiamma electric awning, tow bar, 40cm satellite dome, 2 televisions, spare wheel, cobra alarm, tracker, waeco reversing camera, 2 gas bottles, silver screen cover, 2 leisure batteries, outdoor shower unit, outdoor 3 pin socket, leveling chocks, wastehog carrier, wrap around windbreak. **Private - Lancashire - 07990580089/ 07768833418 (900557)**



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RENAULT MASTER 2.8DCI, 2001, £11500 ONO 2" 110amp batteries with inverter/charger & mains. shower/toilet/basin, sink/ drainer, hot water boiler, tv dvd, microwave, gas hob, room heater, Outwell Countryman Driveaway Awning, water tank, ample storage, gas storage area, roof vent **Private - Bucks - 07950213378 daytime (904378)**



SAFARI 24'TREK, 1996, 57640mils, £11995 Chevrolet chassis, 6.5 T/D, Auto, P/S, Cruise control, Reversing monitor, Hyd jacks, 12 months MOT, Generator, Roof A/C, Microwave, T/V, recently fitted new fridge/freezer, Nice original condition, New batteries, Paul Dudley RV Trade - **Oxfordshire - 07910115831 Anytime (903929)**



SWIFT KON-TIKI 665, 2003, 26,800mils, £24995 ONO 6 berth, fixed rear bed with over cab double and further double in lounge area. New solar panel, reversing camera, tv/dvd, fridge/microwave. Full MOT, road tax, new tyres, alloy wheels, trauma heating, tow bar. **Private - Worcestershire - 07599514425 any time (905142)**



SWIFT KON-TIKI Z, 2002, 39000mils, £16650 ONO Spacious and comfortable with end bedroom. MOT 05/16, recent cambelt. Extras: 240v inverter, solar panel, fixed TV aerial, self seek satellite dish, tow bar, awning, automatic reversing camera, CD, Alarm. **Private - Nottinghamshire - 07432117852 Anytime (904085)**



SWIFT BOLERO 630PR, 2010, 5,500mils, £35500 Lots of extras motorised sat system, porch awning winterised water tanks full width tow bar proper awning rail fitted tv with dvd call for list. **Private - Essex - 01440 785924 Any normal time (904258)**



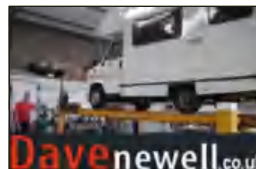
SWIFT BOLERO 712SB, 2014, 6350mils, £46995 ONO Luxury 2 berth. In as new condition. Upgrades include Quantum remap; inverter; second leisure battery; towbar; AVTEX 16 inch TV; Impala "spillproof" upholstery; bespoke driver and passenger seat covers. **Private - Peterborough - 01733221664 / 07966945156 (904081)**



TOYOTA HIACE HI-TOP, 1996, 56000mils, £10500 ONO 2.8 Diesel, 4-Berth, Auto, Immobiliser, P/S, A/C, C/L, E/W, reversing camera, Diesel Heater, 3-way Fridge, hob, sink, mains electric and 12v, awning, habitation certificate, no damp or leaks. **Private - West Lothian - 07946607439 07917426521 Evenings (905878)**



VOLKSWAGEN T5 JAS CONVERSION, 2010, 10,408mils, £28500 FSH/MOT Oct 2016 £28500 custom built from new oak cabinets fridge cooker sink r & bed tv/dvd gas heating parking sensors elevating roof excellent condition no pets/smokers **Private - Vale of Glamorgan - 01446408314 07952605104 (905612)**



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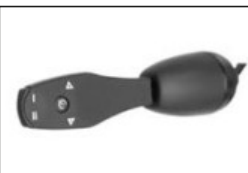
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PRIVATE REGISTRATION PLATE, £1000 T1XEO Ideal for Burstner Ixco Motorhome. Registration on retention at present. Sale due to sale of Motorhome Private - Lancashire - 01254 390858 07453306918 Anytime (905429)



PEUGEOT 107 CAR WITH A-FRAME, 2014, £6000 One owner. 6996 miles. Fitted with an A frame and electric brakes to European standards making it legal to tow with a campervan. The car has just been serviced by main agent. Road fund licence is zero. Private - Devon - 01647 252626 (905406)



VAUXHALL CORSA WITH CAR-A-TOW A-FRAME, 2002, £1850 1.4SRi petrol. Vehicle in very good condition. 84,000 miles. 11 months MOT. Car will also be valeted. Manual, 2 door, black. AM/FM Stereo, CD Player. Private - Sussex - 01424 893 990/905367



SMART CAR FORTWO COUPE PASSION, 2009, £4500 ONO 1.0 MHD 21000 miles with electronically braked A frame fitted by Towcar. Cherished Reg. Number included. Panoramic roof, Air Con. Elec. windows. Long MOT & Tax. Excellent condition throughout. Private - Northamptonshire - 01327 878744/07581507727 Anytime (904444)

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COACHBUILTS

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2010 (10) Fiat Ducato Autocruise Startrail 2.3TD 4 berth, PAS air-con, sw/Seats, rear bed, e/w&m, rear washroom, Full S/H..... £33,995
2008 (08) Fiat Ducato Swift Voyager 695EL 2.3TD 4 berth, PAS awning, roof bars, c/rack, air-con, sw/Seats, rear U lounge..... £32,995
2007 (07) Fiat Ducato Rapido Le-Randonneur 7099F 2.3TD 2/3 berth PAS, awning, ladder, air-con, sw/Seats, rear bed, end washroom..... £32,995
2007 (07) Fiat Ducato Swift Bolero 680FB 2.3TD 4 berth, PAS awning, roof bars, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seats, rear bed..... £28,995
2007 (07) Fiat Ducato Rapido Le Randonneur 743F 2.3TD 2/3 berth PAS, awning, ladder, c/rack, air-con, sw/Seats, rear bed, garage..... £28,995
2007 (57) Fiat Ducato Burstner Travel Van i570G 2.3TD 2/3 berth PAS, awning, c/rack, air-con, sw/Seats, airbags, rear bed, garage..... £28,995
2008 (08) Peugeot Boxer Autocruise Pioneer Darwin 3.0TD 2 berth PAS, awning, ladder, c/rack, air-con, sw/Seats, rear bed..... £28,995
2009 (09) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Autoquest 180 2.2TD 6 berth, PAS awning, c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £28,995
2009 (59) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Autoquest 155 2.2TD 4 berth, PAS c/rack, aerial, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seats, rear bed & washroom..... £28,995
2009 (09) Fiat Ducato Swift Sundance 590RS 2.2TD 4/5 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, rear washroom & kitchen..... £28,995
2007 (56) Renault Master Autotrail Miami SE 3.0TD 2+2 berth, PAS awning, air-con, c/lock, sw/Seats, 2 s/beds, end washroom..... £27,995
2006 (06) Fiat Ducato Autotrail Mohican SE 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS awning, ladder & rack, tow bar, c/lock, sw/Seats, end washroom..... £27,995
2009 (58) Fiat Ducato Swift Sunter 530LP 2.2TD 2 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seats, rear w/room & kitchen..... £26,995
2006 (06) Fiat Ducato Bessacarr Elegance E725 2.8TD 4 berth, PAS awning, ladder & bars, tow bar, c/rack, alloys, rear lounge..... £25,995
2005 (05) Fiat Ducato Rapido Le Randonneur 746F 2.8TD 2-3 berth PAS, awning, ladder, c/rack, tow bar, c/rack, sw/Seats, rear bed..... £25,995
2005 (05) Fiat Ducato Swift Kontiki 600 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS ladder & bars, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seats, 240/12V, rear bed..... £25,995
2005 (05) Fiat Ducato Lunar Roadstar 726 2.8TD 6 berth, PAS awning, ladder & bars, tow bar, air-con, c/lock, rear lounge..... £25,995
2007 (07) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Sunter 180 2.2TD 6 berth, PAS awning, tow bar, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, rear U lounge..... £25,995
2010 (10) Ford Transit Rollerteam Auto-Roller 100 2.2TD 2-3 berth PAS, awning, c/rack, c/lock, sw/Seats, rear bed, garage..... £25,995
2007 (57) Ford Transit Rollerteam Auto-Roller 600 2.4TD 6 berth PAS, awning, c/rack, c/lock, airbags, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £25,995
2009 (09) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Autoquest Sunseeker 130 2.2TD 4/5 berth, PAS, c/rack, c/lock, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £25,995
2004 (54) Peugeot Boxer Autocruise Wentworth Tres Bella 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS, awning, tow bar, e/w&m, sw/Seats, rear washroom..... £25,995
2004 (04) Fiat Ducato Hobby 700 2.8TD 2+2 berth, LHD, PAS awning, ladder, tow bar, c/lock, sat-dome, garage, 2 rear beds..... £24,995
2007 (07) Peugeot Boxer Compass Avantgarde 150 2.2TD 4 berth, PAS c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear L lounge..... £23,995
2007 (07) Fiat Ducato Swift Sunter 590PR 2.3TD 4 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, alloys, c/lock, e/w&m, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £23,995
2007 (56) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Sunseeker 140 2.2TD 4 berth, PAS awning, tow bar, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, radio, rear U lounge..... £23,995
2003 (03) Fiat Ducato Autotrail Apache 700 2.8TD 6 berth, PAS awning, ladder & bars, tow bar, c/rack, c/lock, rear U lounge..... £22,995
2005 (55) Fiat Ducato Lunar Champ H621 2.8TD 2/3 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, aerial, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seat, airbags, rear bed..... £22,995
2005 (55) Fiat Ducato Swift Sunter 630G 2.8TD 6 berth, PAS awning, ladder, tow bar, c/rack, air-con, c/lock, rear bed, garage..... £22,995
2005 (05) Fiat Ducato Swift Lifestyle 630L 2.8TD 6 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear lounge..... £22,995
2003 (03) Fiat Ducato Swift Kontiki 650 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS, awning tow bar, c/rack, alloys, c/lock, sw/Seats, end washroom..... £22,995

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2003 (03) Mercedes Sprinter Autotrail Cheyenne 630S 2.2TD 4 berth PAS, awning, tow bar, c/rack, rear washroom & kitchen..... £22,995
2001 (51) Ford Iveco Laika Ecovip 100 A-Class 2.8TD 6 berth, PAS awning, tow bar, c/lock, 240/12V, radio, rear bed & washroom..... £21,995
2004 (04) Fiat Ducato Hymer C544k 2.0TD 4/5 berth, PAS, awning ladder & bars, tow bar, c/rack, rear washroom & kitchen..... £20,995
2007 (07) Fiat Ducato Joint Z330 2.2TD 3-4 berth, LHD, PAS awning, alloys, bike rack, c/lock, radio/CD, rear washroom..... £20,995
2005 (05) Peugeot Boxer Autocruise Stargazer 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £20,995
2002 (52) Fiat Ducato Arto by Niesmann and Bischoff A-Class 2.8TD 4 berth, PAS, awning, roof bars, tow bar, rear kitchen..... £20,995
2006 (56) Fiat Ducato Lunar Home-Car C52 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS d/airbag, roof-light, 240/12V, heating, washroom, kitchen..... £20,995

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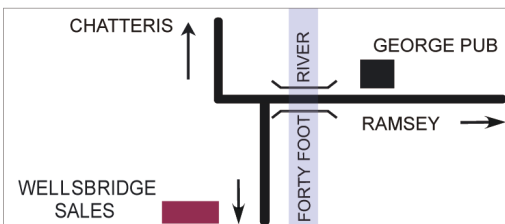
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2004 (54) Fiat Ducato Swift Sunter 590RL 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS awning, ladder, roof rack, c/rack, alloys, c/lock, rear L lounge..... £19,995
2003 (03) Fiat Ducato Swift Sundance 600FB 2.3TD 2 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, sw/Seats, 240/12V, rear bed..... £19,995
2005 (54) Fiat Ducato Bessacarr E410 2.0TD 2 berth, PAS, awning c/rack, c/lock, sw/Seats, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £19,995
2005 (55) Fiat Ducato CI Carioca 625 2.3TD 4 berth, PAS, awning ladder & bars, sw/Seats, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £19,995
2003 (03) Fiat Ducato Burstner T625 Harmony 2.8TD 4 berth, PAS awning, ladder & bars, c/rack, sw/Seats, rear bed & washroom..... £18,995
2004 (04) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Autoquest 200 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS aerial, c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £18,995
2003 (03) Fiat Ducato Ace Novella Napoli 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS, awning c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear L lounge..... £18,995
2003 (53) Fiat Ducato CI Carioca 15P 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS, awning tow bar, aerial, radio/CD, kitchen, rear bed, rear washroom..... £18,995
2004 (04) Peugeot Boxer Elddis Autoquest 200 Hilton 2.0TD 4 berth PAS, awning, ladder & bars, c/rack, c/lock, e/w&m, rear U lounge..... £18,995
2004 (04) Fiat Ducato Autotrail Tracker SE 2.0TD 2 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, 240/12V, rear washroom & kitchen, good s/history..... £18,995
2006 (06) Fiat CI Cusona 594 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS, sat-dish, aerial 240/12V, leisure battery, e/step, heater, washroom, kitchen..... £18,995
2004 (54) Fiat Ducato Knauss Sport Traveller 2.0TD 4 berth, PAS heating, 240/12V, e/step, radio/CD, end washroom, side kitchen..... £17,995
2000 (W) Fiat Ducato Laika Ecovip 2.8TD 4 berth, PAS, awning ladder & bars, tow bar, c/lock, e/w&m, rear bed & washroom..... £16,995
2001 (51) Fiat Ducato Hymer Swing 2.8TD 4/5 berth, PAS, cycle rack solar panel, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £16,995
2001 (Y) Peugeot Boxer Pioneer Classic III 1.9TD 3/4 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £15,995
2001 (X) Fiat Ducato Swift Lifestyle 500 1.9TD 4 berth, PAS, awning cycle rack, 240/12V, leisure battery, washroom, kitchen..... £15,995
1997 (P) Fiat Ducato Autotrail Cheyenne 614 2.5TD 4 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, stable door, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £14,995
1995 (M) Peugeot Boxer Swift Kontiki 2.5TD 2-3 berth, PAS, tow bar ladder & bars, stable door, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear U lounge..... £14,995
1999 (T) Peugeot Boxer Autokomes Wayfinder 1.9TD 4 berth, PAS ladder & bars, c/rack, 240/12V, rear U lounge, 1 Owner, Good S/H..... £13,995
1998 (S) Fiat Ducato Swift Sundance 590LUX RL 2.8D 4 berth, PAS awning, tow bar, aerial, 240/12V, l/batt, radio/CD, rear lounge..... £13,995
1997 (P) Ford Transit Autosleeper Legend 2.5TD 2 berth, PAS awning, ladder, roof rack, c/rack, 240/12V, rear U lounge..... £13,995
1997 (R) Fiat Ducato Hymer Swing 494 1.9TD 4 berth, PAS ladder & bars, c/rack, aerial, heating, stable door, rear washroom..... £12,995
1993 (K) Renault Trafic Elddis Eclipse T1400 2.0L Petrol 4 berth PAS, awning, aerial, stable door, 240/12V, radio/CD, rear lounge..... £9,995
1991 (H) Fiat Ducato Hymer Camp 14 2.5D 4/5 berth, LHD awning, ladder & bars, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £7,995
1994 (L) Fiat Ducato Knauss Motorhome 2.5D 4/5 berth, LHD, PAS awning, ladder & bars, c/rack, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £6,995
1999 (V) Ford Transit Autosleeper Pollensa 2.5TD 4/5 berth, PAS awning, ladder, c/rack, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £15,995

HI-TOPS

1999 (T) Peugeot Boxer Autosleeper Symbol 2.0L Petrol 2 berth, PAS awning, c/rack, sw/Seat, radio/CD, rear washroom & kitchen..... £13,995
1999 (T) Volkswagen Transporter T4 Reimo 1.9TD 2+2 berth, PAS c/rack, sw/Seats, high platform, 240/12V, radio/CD, side kitchen..... £13,995
2000 (V) Mazda Bongo Montague 2.5TD 2+2 berth, Auto, PAS c/rack, elevating roof, air-con, airbags, portapotti, side kitchen..... £11,995
2007 (57) LDV Maxus 3.5/95 Caravanette 2.5TD 2 berth, PAS heater, e/w&m, d/airbag, kitchen and wc. Service lock sheets..... £7,995
1997 (P) Ford Transit JC Leisure Conversion 2.5D 2 berth 2 burner hob, grill, fridge, sink, 240V hook-up..... £7,995
1996 (P) Iveco Sunseeker 2.8TD 2 berth, PAS, awning, aerial Tv point, portapotti, 240/12V, radio/CD, kitchen..... £5,995
1991 (J) Talbot Express Leisuredrive Relax 2.5D 2 berth camper van 240/12V, leisure battery, radio/CD, side kitchen..... £5,995
1997 (P) Renault Trafic Van Conversion 2.0D 2 berth, hob & sink PAS, 240V hook-up, Porta Potti, central locking..... £5,995



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2011 61 Hyundai i800 Wellhouse Camper PAS 2.5 CRDI 39840 miles 2 Berth £29,995

COACHBUILTS

2011 11 Peugeot Autosleeper Cotswold FB PAS 2.2 HDI 7548 miles 4 Berth £39,995
 2013 13 Fiat Burstner Nexxo T660 PAS 130 Multijet 2581 miles 3 Berth £39,995
 2014 14 Fiat Swift Esprit 412 Hi-Style PAS 2.3 Auto 7324 miles 2 Berth £38,995
 2013 13 Fiat Knaus Sky Ti 650 MF PAS 130 Multijet 17456 miles 4 Berth £38,995
 2011 11 Citroen Romahome R40 PAS 2.0 HDI 16187 miles 4 Berth £33,995
 2012 62 Peugeot Elddis Autoquest 155 PAS 2.2 HDI 9231 miles 4 Berth £32,995
 2009 09 Ford Autosleeper Windsor PAS 2.4 TDCI 11086 miles 4 Berth £32,995
 2009 59 Fiat Swift Bolero EW PAS 130 Multijet 17068 miles 2 Berth £32,995
 2009 09 Fiat Ace Adventurer 685 FB PAS 130 Multijet 13407 miles 4 Berth £31,995
 2011 11 Fiat Swift Suntop 620 FB PAS 100 Multijet 18154 miles 4 Berth £31,995
 2009 59 Fiat Swift Suntop 590 RS PAS 100 Multijet 20404 miles 5 Berth £28,995
 2010 10 Ford Dethleffs Eurostyle Sunlight PAS 2.4 TDCI 23766 miles 6 Berth £28,995
 2010 10 Peugeot Elddis Autoquest 155 PAS 2.2 HDI 22373 miles 4 Berth £26,995
 2007 07 Fiat Ace Napoli PAS 2.3 JTD 14168 miles 4 Berth £21,995
 2004 04 Peugeot Autocruise Starspirit PAS 2.2 HDI 13913 miles 2 Berth £21,995
 2006 56 Fiat Swift Sundance 590RL PAS 2.3 JTD 27786 miles 4 Berth £19,995
 2003 03 Fiat Autotrail Tracker CK SE PAS 2.0 JTD 36479 miles 2 Berth £17,995
 2004 04 Peugeot Elddis Autoquest 400 PAS 2.0 HDI 32252 miles 4 Berth £16,995
 2002 02 Fiat Bessacarr E725 PAS 2.8 JTD 23152 miles 4 Berth £16,995
 2001 51 Peugeot Elddis Sunseeker 25 PAS 1.9 Turbo Diesel 42040 miles 4 Berth £14,995

USED CARAVANS

2015 Coachman Pastiche 560/4 M/M Awning 18'6" 1555kg 1401kg 4 Berth £20,995
 2013 Lunar Delta RS Inc. Porch Awning 20'8" 1735kg 1575kg 4 Berth £18,995
 2015 Swift Challenger Sport 442 SR M/Mover 14'5" 1241kg 1120kg 2 Berth £15,650
 2011 Coachman Laser 650/4 20'4" 1800kg 1640kg 4 Berth £14,995
 2013 Swift Challenger Sport 524 SR Inc Mover 17'3" 1500kg 1265kg 4 Berth £13,995
 2012 Bailey Unicorn Seville M/Mover Awning 16'1" 1433kg 1304kg 2 Berth £13,995
 2013 Swift Comiche 17/4 17'4" 1434kg 1284kg 4 Berth £13,995
 2013 Elddis Chatsworth 574 M/Mover Awning 18'8" 1465kg 1312kg 4 Berth £13,995
 2009 Swift Conqueror 645 Inc M/Mover Awng. 20'7" 1830kg 1545kg 4 Berth £13,995
 2010 Bailey Unicorn Valencia (11 Model) M/M 18'8" 1565kg 1409kg 4 Berth £13,995
 2011 Swift Challenger 480 SR Inc Awn & Mover 15'7" 1420kg 1285kg 2 Berth £12,995
 2011 Bailey Pegasus Ancona Inc Mover & Awning 18'8" 1499kg 1311kg 6 Berth £12,995
 2011 Coachman VIP 460/2 Inc Motor Mover 15'8" 1430kg 1303kg 2 Berth £12,495
 2010 Coachman Storrington GTR M/M Awn 19' 1630kg 1446kg 4 Berth £11,995
 2008 Sterling Eccles Elite Diamond Inc. Mover 15'8" 1424kg 1210kg 2 Berth £9,995
 2008 Elddis Odyssey 544 Inc Motor Mover 18'5" 1560kg 1375kg 4 Berth £9,650
 2008 Swift Conqueror 480 Inc Motor Mover 15'7" 1424kg 1210kg 2 Berth £8,995
 2008 Sprite Quattro FB 20'7" 1555kg 1296kg 6 Berth £8,995
 2008 Ace Award Brightstar Inc M/Mover Awng. 15'8" 1366kg 1184kg 2 Berth £8,650
 2007 Ace Award Morningstar Inc M/M Awng 17'2" 1550kg 1324kg 4 Berth £8,495
 2008 Lunar Quasar 524 17'5" 1340kg 1130kg 4 Berth £8,250
 2006 Bailey Pageant Bordeaux Series 5 Awng. 17'7" 1366kg 1150kg 4 Berth £6,995
 2008 Knaus Starclass 470 (2006 Model) Awng 15'6" 1500kg 1326kg 2 Berth £6,995
 2005 Bailey Senator Vermont (06 Model) M/M 16'2" 1385kg 1160kg 2 Berth £6,995

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